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Friday December 1 1995

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Review

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Debunking playlists

World Aids Day

What hope of a cure?

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'On the Falls Road the welcome was larger, more excited, more enthusiastic. Here he met Gerry Adams, and the White House choreography was almost but not quite perfect — the first public handshake between the two men had been shielded from the TV cameras by the motorcade'

Simon Hoggart with the President during his historic visit to Northern Ireland

President Clinton greets Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams with their first public handshake while on walkabout in Belfast

Ulster says Yes to Mr President

THE day was fraught with symbols, but none more powerful than the walkabouts. The president of the United States was able to plunge freely into the crowds lining streets which were once so dangerous that at the height of the troubles, you were almost half as likely to be murdered as you are now in Washington DC.

The visit was beyond doubt a huge success, casting a glow over the entire province which might help to bring a permanent peace, but will at least buy some precious time.

The most overwhelming welcome came in Derry. Tens of thousands of people came to see him walk along roadways where, 27 years ago, Gerry Fitt's head was split open by an RUC baton, and the present troubles began.

Yesterday it was the RUC who were the good guys, standing round in relaxed groups along the routes of the motorcade. Old shabby Santa Claus passed by tugging at his beard. "Would you be one of those FBI men protecting the president?" a sergeant asked cheerfully.

Meanwhile vast US Secret Service men were ordering the populace about, leaving the slime of resentment by which they mark every presidential visit abroad. Air Force One landed at the airport, which until last year looked like a concentration camp. There was a long pause. A slight anxiety here: the last important president to land on Irish soil, Boris Yeltsin, never emerged from the plane and possibly never woke up.

The television commentators began to jabber. President Clinton was being protected by Ninja turtles, they said. This sounded pretty extreme even for Clinton, but it turned out to be the slang name for the RUC men who patrol Belfast's sewers.

Then the absurd 32-car motorcade swept down the Shankill Road, occupying much of its length (there was no sign of the street's most famous old graffiti "Fuck the next Pope").

He stopped outside the fish shop where 10 people were murdered in one of the great atrocities which helped to bring the ceasefire.

Then on to the Mackie factory, which has a mixed workforce and straddles the peace line. This was the key speech, the one which would be read, reread and scrutinised for every nuance, and pillaged for every shade of political advantage.

He said that violence had no place at the table of democracy — but significantly said nothing about the threat of violence. He endorsed the IRA's role in future talks: "Those who renounce violence and take their own risks for peace are entitled to be full participants in the democratic process."

"Never!" shouted a voice belonging to a former DUP councillor, Cedric Wilson, the poor man's Ian Paisley.

Anthony Lake, Clinton's national security adviser, looked anxious. "Oh no," he said. People are not supposed to shout "never" at the president, except perhaps in the US Congress.

Michael Ancram, the British No. 2, reassured him. "To get only one person shouting 'never' in Northern Ireland is a miracle," he said.

Then the president left for a matching walkabout in the Catholic Falls Road. The welcome was larger, more excited, more enthusiastic. Here he met Gerry Adams, and the White House choreography was almost but not quite perfect — the first public handshake between the two men had been shielded from the TV cameras by the motorcade. But an amateur video showed the handclasp was warm and even prolonged, a useful asset for Republicans of the American variety if Mr Adams's associates ever decide to blow up some more civilians.

Then he swept to a business park in the Protestant east of the city where small businesses use capital generated in the States.

Crammed into a breezeblock hut were some of the most important politicans in the whole process: a dozen or so US congresspersons, the American ambassador to London, the British ambassador to Washington and the US network correspondents who are more rich and famous than any of them.

Then he helicoptered to Derry. Here the welcome was fervent.

He was greeted by John Hume, the local MP. Mr Hume is close to achieving secular sainthood in the US, though at home among his colleagues he tends to be regarded as increasingly arrogant and isolated, out of touch with the need to reach the unionists.

Yet no one can forget the man's extraordinary courage over the years when he has feared for his life from Protestant and Catholic extremists alike. Mr Clinton paid numerous tributes to him.

Mr Hume said this was the most historic day in the history of the city — a snub, deliberate or accidental, to local Protestants for whom the only important day happened in 1690 when the Apprentice Boys refused to allow Governor Lundy to surrender the city.

The only surprise was that Mr Clinton did not single out Governor Lundy as another "man of peace" — though even without this the jubilation in the crowded city streets must have brought a shiver of anxiety to many unionists.

In front of City Hall in Belfast another vast crowd built up to await the president. It was the biggest crowd since the time 10 years ago when Protestants gathered to protest against the Anglo Irish Agreement.

But that was then and this was now.

How a nine-year-old's words captured the spirit of peace

SHE is only nine years old, but Catherine Hamill captured the spirit of the changed times in Northern Ireland yesterday with a few poignant words to President Clinton, *writes David Sharrock*.

"My first Daddy died in the Troubles," she told him and 500 guests at Mackies, a factory which straddles the Peace Line of West Belfast, separating Catholics and Protestants.

"It was the saddest day of my life. I still think of him. Now it is nice and peaceful. My Christmas wish is that peace and love will last in Ireland forever," she said.

"Daddy" was Patrick Hamill, one of 93 victims murdered in 1987. She had been a baby when the Ulster Freedom Fighters knocked at their door and shot Patrick dead, for being a Catholic.

It was a finely choreographed piece of symbolism, but no less touching for that. The roaring applause of the audience, including British ministers and Sinn Fein councillors, blue-collar workers and US Congressmen, proved that.

"The history of Northern Ireland has been written in the blood of its children and their parents," Mr Clinton said. "The ceasefire turned the page on that history; it must not be allowed to turn back."

'Despot' Howard warned

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE Home Secretary, Michael Howard, is today accused by one of the most senior judicial figures in the country of acting as a "despot" in his plans to interfere with the independence of the courts.

The former Master of the Rolls, Lord Donaldson, says in an article in today's Guardian that he has to speak out after 26 years as a judge because in recent months there has been an "entirely new development" which has triggered a constitutional crisis.

"This is an attack by the politicians on the judiciary as a whole," he writes in today's Guardian. "This is without precedent in my professional lifetime and raises very serious constitutional issues."

The judge's anger has been sparked by the Home Secretary's plans to introduce "two strikes and you're out" automatic life sentences for repeat rapists and minimum jail sentences for burglars and drug dealers. Both proposals remove the discretion of judges in passing sentence.

Mr Howard's proposals, first unveiled at the Conservative Party Conference last month, have already triggered a public warning from the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, and a warning from within Cabinet by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay. Last week the Lord Chancellor said he saw "quite substantial difficulties" with Mr Howard's plans.

'It is one thing to be governed by the rule of law. It is quite another to be governed by a despotic, albeit no doubt benevolent, government'
— Lord Donaldson

The Home Secretary yesterday brushed aside this criticism and, claiming a flood of support from the public, went further than his Blackpool speech. He said he now intended to implement the proposals in a new Crime Bill before the next election. Until now Mr Howard has only said there would be a consultative White Paper next spring, leaving open the possibility that the highly controversial proposals would be a general election manifesto pledge.

Mr Howard said there would be stiff minimum sentences for burglars and drug dealers unless there were really exceptional circumstances, and automatic life sentences for second serious sexual or violent offences.

His determination to press ahead is likely to intensify the growing constitutional clash between the Government and senior judges.

Lord Donaldson, who did not have a liberal reputation as a senior judge, argues in his Guardian article that Parliament is supreme and it can, if it wishes, transfer some of the powers of the judiciary to the executive.

"Such a course would, however, pose a considerable threat to the freedom of the individual citizen," says the former Master of the Rolls.

"It is one thing to be governed by the rule of law. It is quite another to be governed by a despotic, albeit no doubt benevolent, government. And any government which seeks to make itself immune to an independent review of whether its actions are lawful or unlawful is potentially despotic."

He goes on to say that the current "concerted attack upon the judiciary is clearly a prelude to an attempt to secure parliamentary authority" to introduce Mr Howard's package. He was concerned that "any increase in mandatory life sentences gives the Home Secretary additional scope for exercising the power to release politically".

He says the package will transfer some sentencing powers to the Government, curb the powers of the judges to take full account of the circumstances of individual cases by providing for minimum sentences, "and limit the powers of the courts to decide, by means of judicial review, whether the Government is exceeding the powers granted to it by Parliament".

Last week the Lord Chancellor said there were difficulties with minimum sentences "because there are often exceptional cases. I would expect that Michael Howard would wish to put forward ways of dealing with that."

However he emphasised that he was speaking as a member of the executive, and not as a judge.

Beware this abuse, page 9

Church must speak up for marriage, says Carey

Madeleine Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

THE Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday launched a swingeing attack on a Church of England report that says living in sin is no longer sinful.

Warning that cohabitation was no substitute for marriage, George Carey also called for the church to be "uncompromising" in upholding the values of marital fidelity. He told members of the church's ruling body, the General Synod: "Marriage, not cohabitation, is the institution which is at the heart of the good society and let us not be reluctant to say so as a church."

Dr Carey said he was "very disappointed" with the report, which did not focus strongly enough on the impact of family life based on a husband and wife in a permanent loving relationship. This ideal had run through the Bible.

The archbishop said the report left the impression that "no single form of the family" was a God-given ideal.

His reassertion of the primacy of the marriage vows placed him firmly within the alliance of church evangelicals and conservative right-wingers who have been waging a crusade against progressive morality.

Full reports, page 3

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WORLD AIDS DAY: Victims and campaigners warn against complacency as changing attitudes fail to hold back worldwide scourge

Britain's HIV slowdown bucks trend

Chris Mihill
Medical Correspondent

AS VIGILS and commemorative services are held to mark World Aids Day today, forecasters are predicting a slowing in the rate of spread of the virus in Britain.

However, on a global level it is clear that the virus is winning, with rapid spread in many parts and a feared explosion of HIV in Asia, including the most populous countries, China and India.

A new assessment released by the Department of Health of the likely number of cases to 1999 in England and Wales gives lower figures than projections from a similar report in 1993. A committee chaired by Professor Nick Day, of Cambridge University, concludes there will be between 1,840 and 2,300 new cases of Aids in 1997 and 1,760 to 2,455 new cases in 1999.

Between 1995 and 1999 new Aids cases in homosexual and bisexual men may fall by 7 per cent from the 1,330 so far in 1995.

New cases in heterosexuals are expected to increase by 25 per cent over the same period, from 420 to 525. There will be an increase of 29 per cent in Aids cases among injecting drug users, from 120 to 155.

Cases in children of mothers infected with HIV will increase, from 30 in 1994 to 55 in 1999, and cases arising from contaminated blood or clotting factors are due to fall to 30 a year, from a peak in the late 1980s of 70 cases a year.

The Day committee says that in 1999 it is estimated that 4,010 Aids cases will be alive in England and Wales, with a similar number of people with other forms of severe HIV disease.

The projection for Aids cases among heterosexuals in 1997 is 37 per cent lower than forecasts published in 1993.

The report says there were probably between 20,400 and 23,400 people in England and Wales at the end of 1993 who were HIV positive.

The committee says most HIV infections and Aids cases due to heterosexual exposure are thought to have been acquired abroad. The number acquired heterosexually in the UK is put at 25 a year in 1993 and 1994.

Latest figures from the Public Health Laboratory Service, which collates cases throughout the UK, say that up until September this year there have been 11,494 Aids cases since reporting began in January 1982, of whom 7,869 (68 per cent) have died.

A cumulative total of 25,220 HIV infections have been reported since 1984. Of these sexual intercourse between men was the probable route of infection for 61 per cent of the cases, and between men and women for 18 per cent of the cases. However, heterosexual infections accounted for 30 per cent of infections reported in the 12 months to September — 851 of 2,869 cases.

It is the continuing toll of infections and deaths amongst gay men that have led to increasingly vocal calls from the gay community to "re-gay" HIV and Aids, retargeting health information on homosexuals rather than the general public. Nick Partridge, chief executive of the Terrence Higgins Trust, said: "There is still an unacceptably high level of HIV transmission, particularly amongst gay and bisexual men. On average, one gay man is infected every eight hours in the UK."

The Government takes a similarly cautious view of the figures. Gerald Malone, health minister, said: "It is 10 years since the start of our intensive public education campaign on the dangers of HIV and Aids. By taking that threat seriously we have had real success in slowing the spread of the disease. As a result, we are a low prevalence country in an increasingly high prevalence world.

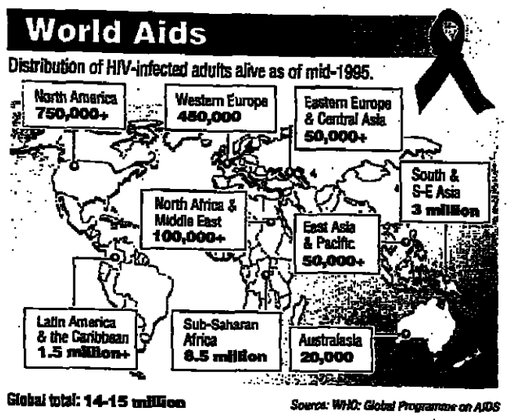
"But we cannot be complacent. There is no cure for Aids. There is no vaccine for HIV. It is vital to keep messages about safer sex to the forefront of people's minds."

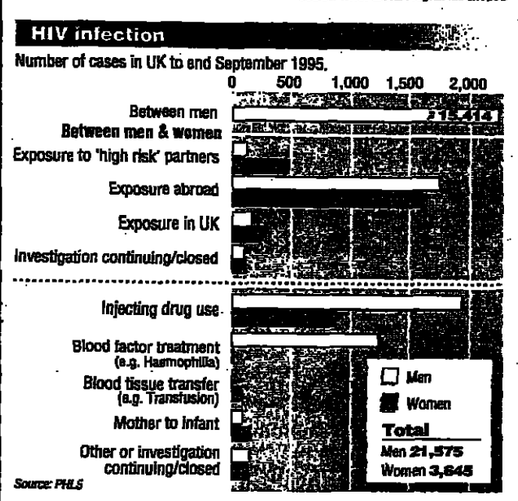
Hopes for a vaccine remain elusive, though there have been promising reports of success in immunising macaque monkeys against SIV, the primate form of HIV.

There is optimism that a new class of drugs called protease inhibitors, which work on a different part of the virus's replication cycle from drugs like AZT, could help to its progress.

The World Health Organisation estimates that there are over 14 million people living with Aids or HIV — eight million men and six million women — and every day more than 6,000 people are newly infected. Globally, heterosexual transmission accounts for 75 per cent of HIV infection. By 2000 it is expected that 30 to 40 million people will have been infected.

Leader comment, page 8





Candles are lit at Leicester Square Gardens, London, in a Prelude To Aids Day commemorating those affected by Aids PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

The victim

'I think of Aids every day. I'll never have an Aids-free day'

WHEN Frank Wilson's ashes were buried alongside his mother in the Cumbrian town of Keswick, mourners who asked were told the 31-year-old accountant had died of pneumonia, *writes Sally Weale.*

It was May 1985 and Keswick, where Frank and his older sister, Patsy, spent childhood summers swimming in Derwent Water, was not ready for Aids. When Patsy told the family, her aunt begged her not to tell anyone else. Ten years later, Patsy has still not discussed it with them.

The Christmas before his death, Frank was pale and thin, and was having difficulty eating. He put it down to ulcers, which had plagued his father, and promised his sister he would see the doctor. In March he told her he was almost sure he had Aids.

Patsy's reaction was utter shock. Their parents had died some time earlier, and she was Frank's only surviving close relative. "I just could not function at all.

"I was the chair of the Tyneside Gay Teenagers group and we had had somebody to talk to us about HIV." Her brother had told her in his teens that he was gay. "At that meeting it went through my mind, 'I wonder if this will ever happen to Frank'. It was such a horrible thought I dismissed it very quickly."

When she was told she rang her local hospital to see if somebody could talk to her. "Eventually I got through to someone and all I can remember him saying was, 'Don't tell anybody your brother has Aids. You must keep it quiet'. It was such a taboo thing."

When Frank was admitted to London's Hammersmith Hospital, he was only the second case of Aids they had knowingly dealt with, and the doctors still had little idea how to tackle it. They began an aggressive treatment programme, feeding him a concoction of strong drugs, and six days before the end they put him on a ventilator, when really he should have been allowed to have what little time he had left with his friends and family.

Patsy Wilson ... reacted with utter shock

Everyone who came into contact with him was obliged to wear gown, gloves and mask. A nurse who was trying to open a window for Frank gingerly moved his bed out of the way using paper towels to avoid contact with the bed frame. She was already wearing gloves. Patsy was deeply hurt. "It was crackers," she says. "None of that happens now."

Patsy, aged 47, of Wallsend, North Tyneside, co-ordinates a support group for carers looking after people with HIV and Aids. She has lost two of her closest friends to Aids. "I think of Aids every single day of my life. I will never have an Aids-free day." But she is confident it will never again be swept under the carpet.

Even in Keswick? "Even in Keswick. I'm sure there will be people who know people with HIV or Aids, though in 1985 they had no idea that it touched their lives so closely."

The survivor

'It's just a nasty little virus. It's up to you to overcome it'

WHEN Anne was diagnosed HIV positive in 1987, she contacted an estate agent and prepared to put her house on the market. She planned for her death, *writes Sally Weale.*

She felt it was the responsible thing to do. Today she is very much alive, the future much less certain than the early days of Aids and HIV awareness when the Government's TV tombstone campaign passed a death sentence on all those infected.

For many like Anne (not her real name), the reality of an HIV positive diagnosis means living with the virus rather than dying of it. Now 44, she talks little of hospitals, drugs or illness, her conversation is instead bristling with plans — a journey up the Amazon, her activities at the London Lighthouse, the pantomime she is writing for her local amateur dramatic group. "I'm Peter Pan, I'm going to live forever," she says.

"Life hasn't changed that much. I'm still doing things for other people. I'm still active, still very close to the family. But I suppose life's got a different slant on it," she says. "Now I feel life's there to be enjoyed."

Anne has never established for certain how she contracted the virus — she travelled extensively but has never been sexually promiscuous. She believes it happened when she was raped while working as a live-in nanny. Exactly six months after that she started getting a rash, headaches and a fever.

Five years later she had negative tests for glandular fever. "Because of the coverage in the papers I said 'Let's have an Aids test'. I didn't think it was Aids. I couldn't imagine why I would be positive. Anyway, it came up, bingo."

She told those closest to her and found only support. The council where she worked as a home carer however suggested she moved to a position which did not involve hands-on care. "We had just written an Aids policy. I very nearly flung it back at them."

One of the most painful experiences came on an American camping holiday where she confided in one or two companions that she was HIV positive.

"Suddenly I found myself in the middle of Yellowstone and I was not wanted on the journey. They just said 'We don't want you around any more. We're frightenend'. That was the first abject rejection I got."

Since those early days, she says attitudes have changed considerably, none more so than her own. "It's taken me a long time to come to terms with it. I've realised now it's just a nasty little virus that's inside you and it's up to you to do what you can to overcome it."

Her fear however is that society is beginning to drop its guard. There is an Aids-fatigue, a misplaced confidence among those who have escaped so far that the dangers have somehow gone away.

"You think, 'Oh please, for God's sake, it's still out there and it will be with us for a long time to come'."

Tories counter-attack on Scottish constitution

Erlend Clouston and Patrick Wintour

THE government yesterday announced a second package of measures designed to devolve power from Westminster to Scotland and take the wind out of the sails of the Labour and Liberal Democrats' Edinburgh launch of their proposals for a Scottish parliament.

The Scottish National Party, meanwhile, was outlining its blueprint for a 200-member parliament which would help set up an Association of States of the British Isles.

Twenty-four hours after detailing plans to beef up the Scottish Grand Committee, the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, declared last night that he was "favourably disposed" towards over half of the 52 proposals put to him last week by the Labour-dominated Covention of Scottish Local Authorities.

While he has rejected the abolition of capping, it seems likely that councils will be presented with one lump sum which they can divide as they choose between education, social work, roads, transport and general services.

Other responsibilities up for consultation in what Mr Forsyth termed "a fundamental shift of power" include decision on school closures, responsibility for trunk roads, and the possibility that local authorities might make their own bylaws.

Mr Forsyth, who in the past has talked about transferring decisions away from legislative elites to neighbourhoods and even streets also confirmed that he would be supporting the Highland village of Laggan's bid to buy its surrounding woodland from the Forestry Commission.

There will also be a bigger role for the advisory Scottish Economic Council, following a suggestion by Campbell Christie, general secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress. The membership of the Labour-founded body will be broadened and meetings held more often.

> Forsyth claims a fundamental power shift as Labour derides 'sketching on the back of envelopes'

The Tories' constitutional offensive was derided as "sketching on the back of envelopes" by the shadow Scottish secretary, George Robertson. He was speaking at a celebratory gathering of the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which has spent since 1989 evolving plans for a 129-seat Scottish parliament.

The parliament would have responsibility for policies currently determined by the Scottish Office. While Mr Robertson warned yesterday that it would not be a cure for all of Scotland's problems, its supporters believe that its ability to encourage training, research and development, and investment will create an economic renaissance.

The Labour leader, Tony Blair, yesterday threw his weight behind the Lib-Lab call for a Scottish Parliament, but was careful to stress that the detailed proposals would not lead to the break-up of Britain or any big increase in the tax burden on Scotland.

Speaking in London, he claimed Mr Forsyth's own proposals had shot the Tory claim that any change to the status quo would undermine the Union. "In the late 20th century it is preposterous to claim that the only responses to grievances about the lack of democratic accountability are to do nothing or to create a nation state," he said.

The SNP's vision of Scotland's future, presented at Edinburgh City Chambers yesterday, envisages a 200-member parliament, 56 of whom would be elected by the additional member system.

There would be a written constitution, legal status for the Gallic language, and a chancellor (parliamentary speaker) who would stand in for the Queen.

"This is the only set of proposals that will provide a clear-cut, definitive and forward-looking answer to the Scottish question," said the SNP leader, Alex Salmond.

Mozart at speed and in depth

First night

Edward Greenfield

Cosi Fan Tutte
Royal Festival Hall, London/ Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WHAT a relief it is to have a concert performance of Cosi Fan Tutte, superbly cast and winningly acted, without intrusion from a director determined to impose his clever re-interpretation of Mozart and Da Ponte. The Royal Festival Hall is hardly ideal for Mozartian comedy but, with surtitles to guide us, the result was effervescent. Eat your heart out, Peter Sellars, who was looking pensive in the audience.

We owed this offering to the old habit, sadly much rarer than it used to be, of linking opera performances with recordings. In my score of Cosi I note that the last performance I saw at the Festival Hall was also geared to an EMI recording. Then, in 1971, the conductor was Otto Klemperer, with Margaret Price and Geraint Evans.

The contrast this time could not have been greater. In place of the solidity of Klemperer came the resilience and athleticism of Sir Simon Rattle with the masterly period band of which he is principal guest conductor: the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

At Glyndebourne 4½ years ago, Rattle opened the Mozart bicentenary season, conducting this opera with this orchestra. The timing this time reflected that experience in the theatre. Period performance often leads to speed at all costs, but Rattle was far more discriminating. He began at speeds to tax even the OAE players' agility, but the pacing was geared to bringing out the deeper emotions which transform 18th-century convention into universal revelation.

With Thomas Allen as Don Alfonso relaxedly leading the way, the characters could not have been more sharply presented. The growing mellowness of Allen's voice and manner contrasted well with the youthful freshness of the American tenor, Kurt Streit as Ferrando (who sang the role at Glyndebourne) and of the Canadian baritone, Gerald Finley, as Guglielmo. It was a joy to hear such daringly extreme pianissimos as Streit's in Un'Aura Amorosa.

With Ann Murray as Despina, matching Allen in her magnetism, the women made just as strong a trio. The Swedish soprano, Hillevi Martinpelto, as Fiordiligi, and Alison Hagley as Dorabella sang with fine projection and precision. The Choir of the Enlightenment were equally crisp, and John Constable's inventive fortepiano continuo added to the sparkle.

Performances at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, tonight and on Sunday will be recorded by EMI, with patching sessions to follow.

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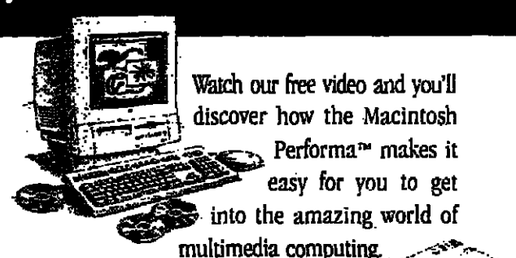

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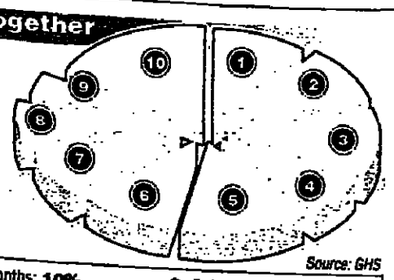
Living together

Duration of cohabitation, 1990-93.



Average (median) duration, 32 months

Source: GHS

1 Under 6 months: 10%
2 6 months to 1 year: 10%
3 1 year to 18 months: 12%
4 18 months to 2 years: 7%
5 2-3 years: 14%
6 3-4 years: 10%
7 4-5 years: 8%
8 5-6 years: 7%
9 6-7 years: 4%
10 7 years or more: 18%

Something to Celebrate

1 No single form of the family is a God-given universal blueprint, in relation to which every other form has to be compared and evaluated.

2 The first step the Church should take is to abandon the phrase 'living in sin'. This is a most unhelpful way of characterising the lives of cohabitees. It has the effect of reducing cohabitation in all its complexity of intentions and variety of forms to a single, sensationalist category.

3 Some forms of cohabitation are marriages in all but name....cohabitation which involves a mutual, life-long, exclusive commitment may be a legitimate form of marriage.

4 Many gay and lesbian partnerships...are able to create relationships of high quality, capable of expressing love, joy, peace.....these families should be given encouragement and support in the living out of their commitments to each other and to their children.

5 Studies of the effects of gay and lesbian parenting demonstrate that neither in terms of sexual identity, sexual role, nor sexual orientation are children confused or disabled.

Archbishop Carey

1 A married man and woman and their children should be the basic building block for family life.

2 Cohabitation is not, and cannot be, marriage in all but name.

3 Marriage, not cohabitation is the institution which is at the heart of the good society and let us not be reluctant to say so.

4 There is a strong and recurrent emphasis (in the Bible), from Adam and Eve onwards, on the importance of family life based on husband and wife in a loving permanent relationship.

5 Those who choose to cohabit on the grounds that their relationship is a private matter and nothing to do with the wider society are, frankly, deluding themselves.

One of the banners carried by demonstrators outside Westminster Cathedral, where the Queen attended Vespers yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Carey attack widens marriage split

Uncompromising Synod speech delights pro-family rightwingers

Madeleine Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, stepped into the increasingly bitter public debate over the family and marriage yesterday with a withering attack on liberal attitudes.

Dr Carey reasserted the primacy of marriage vows, and placed himself firmly within the alliance of church evangelicals and Conservative rightwingers who are crusading against progressive morality.

The archbishop's speech to the General Synod, the Anglican Church's governing body, delighted Tory MPs and other pro-family activists, and is likely to revive the campaign whose recent successes include the dropping of the Domestic Violence bill and jeopardisation of Lord Mackay's divorce reforms.

The archbishop stated categorically that the married couple and their children were the Christian ideal and the building block of family life. He bitterly criticised the Church of England's report on the family for failing to uphold Christian teaching on marriage and for equating cohabitation with it.

"Cohabitation is not, and cannot be, marriage in all but name," the archbishop said, in sharp contradiction to the report. "Those who choose to cohabit on the grounds that their relationship is a private matter ... are, frankly, deluding themselves.

"Of course we often see the marks of faithful love and goodness in many cohabiting relationships, but they remain private and provisional in status.

"Marriage, not cohabitation, is the institution which is at the heart of the good society, and let us not be reluctant to say so," he said.

His comments will be pounced on by critics as being out of touch with social reality: fewer couples than ever are choosing to marry, and more than a third of births are outside marriage — half of them to cohabiting couples.

The publication of the report, Something to Celebrate, last June provoked controversy, in particular for its suggestion that the Church should drop the phrase "living in sin". It urged respect for cohabitation, single parents and gay couples.

Rightwing moralists accused the Church of watering down its teaching and trying too hard to accommodate social change. The report also angered many in the Church who viewed it as too liberal.

Dr Carey's unexpected intervention into the General synod's debate on the report was a sharp rebuke to its authors. He admitted being disappointed that they had not maintained a "clear focus more consistently" on the Christian ideal of marriage.

Church leaders were backpedalling fast on the report. Even the Bishop of Liverpool, chairman of the working party that wrote it, claimed it had been misinterpreted. He hoped the debate would "send out a ringing affirmation of marriage — lifelong, faithful marriage".

The archbishop's speech was greeted warmly by synod members, many of whom had called for the report to be thrown out, although they voted to "take note" of the report with one amendment underlining the importance of marriage. The synod member and Tory MP Sir Patrick Cormack said: "I thought Dr Carey gave a very clear and definite statement. It was very well received by synod. I'm very pleased he did it.

Dr Carey was condemned by the Labour MP Clive Soley, who has had a relationship for more than 12 years with a partner with whom he has two young children. "I believe that I and my family have as much right as any other family to be at the heart of the good society," he said. "It may be politically correct to say that all cohabiting couples should marry but it is neither wise nor just."

The Queen has become the first monarch in 300 years to attend a service in a Catholic church. **Edward Pilkington** reports

THE Queen, as supreme governor of the Church of England, made the most formal gesture of reconciliation with Rome in almost 300 years yesterday when she attended her first full religious service in a Roman Catholic church.

The decision to attend vespers at Westminster Cathedral was believed to have been the first occasion a British sovereign has sat through a service in a Catholic church since 1689, when James II was deposed over his support for Rome. In 1977, during her Jubilee tour of Britain, the Queen visited Liverpool's Catholic cathedral but did not attend a complete service.

Last night's special service to mark the centenary of the foundation of Westminster Cathedral and the Feast of St Andrew was ecumenical and did not include a mass.

Cardinal Basil Hume, the head of the Catholic church in England who led the service, said the Queen's presence took forward the healing process between the two denominations begun in 1982 when she received the Pope in Buckingham Palace. "This is a further affirmation of the place that we Catholics have in the nation," he said.

As the Queen arrived in the piazza of the red and white stone Byzantine-style edifice a small but vocal body of Protestant fundamentalists made clear their displeasure. They chanted anti-Papist slogans and distributed leaflets.

Michael Hobbis, a reformed baptist from south London, slammed the Queen's concession as "another step into the superstition of the Dark Ages when people worshipped relics and bought indulgences."

A fellow baptist, Michael de Semlyen, said the event was part of "an ongoing process that was invisible to most people in which Roman Catholicism was regaining a power base under the cloak of ecumenicism."

The protest was not wholly confined to Protestants. A Catholic woman in the congregation, who asked not to be named, said she objected to having had to sing the line in God Save the Queen, "May she defend our laws."

"Those laws still include discrimination against Catholics in this country, who are forbidden under the Act of Settlement from marrying an heir to the throne or from becoming prime minister."

The evening service was the Queen's second gesture of reconciliation in a week. At the opening of Synod on Tuesday she spoke of the need to recognise the many different religions co-existing in modern Britain.

Wrangle over cohabitation figures

Challenge to view that married couples stay together longer

David Brindle

EXPERTS are locked in bitter argument over whether cohabiting couples are much less likely to stay together than those who are married.

The latest research, published in October, suggests that half cohabiting couples split up within three years. By contrast, figures published this week show the average divorce occurs after almost 10 years of marriage. Between a third and half of all marriages are ending in divorce.

The debate was triggered by a claim by Alistair Burt, social security minister, that cohabiting couples were more than four times as likely to split up as those who were married.

Mr Burt cited findings from the British Household Panel Survey, which tracks 10,000 people over time. But Mike Murphy, reader in population studies at the London School of Economics, challenged the interpretation and said it was almost certain there was no difference between married and cohabiting couples' propensity to separate if proper allowance was made for the presence of children in a relationship and length of time together.

In October, Nick Buck and John Ermisch, who work on the survey, hit back at Mr Murphy with research showing that cohabiting couples were almost six times as likely to split up as those who were married.

Even where there were children, the researchers said, cohabiting couples were more than four times as likely to part. They concluded that "cohabitation spells are significantly more likely to dissolve than marriages".

Mr Buck and Mr Ermisch estimate that half of all cohabiting unions end within 32 months — a strikingly similar finding to evidence from the General Household Survey that cohabiting couples had been together on average about 32 months.

Studies suggest that about two in three women cohabit in their first partnership. The number of marriages has fallen to the lowest level since the mid-1920s, apart from an artificially low figure in 1943.

Guardian prizewinner Buchan follows his grandfather's footsteps

Alex Bellos

JAMES BUCHAN, a former Financial Times journalist and grandson of the author of The Thirty-Nine Steps, last night won the 30th Guardian Fiction Award.

Buchan (left), aged 41, took the £2,000 prize for his second novel, Heart's Journey in Winter, a meticulously planned 200-page thriller about the collapse of Communism set in 1983 West Germany. The book fended off tough competition from the Booker Prize-winning The Ghost Road by Pat Barker, Salman Rushdie's The Moor's Last Sigh and Martin Amis's The Information. The other shortlisted books were The Unconsoled by Kazuo Ishiguro and The Smell of Apples by Mark Behr.

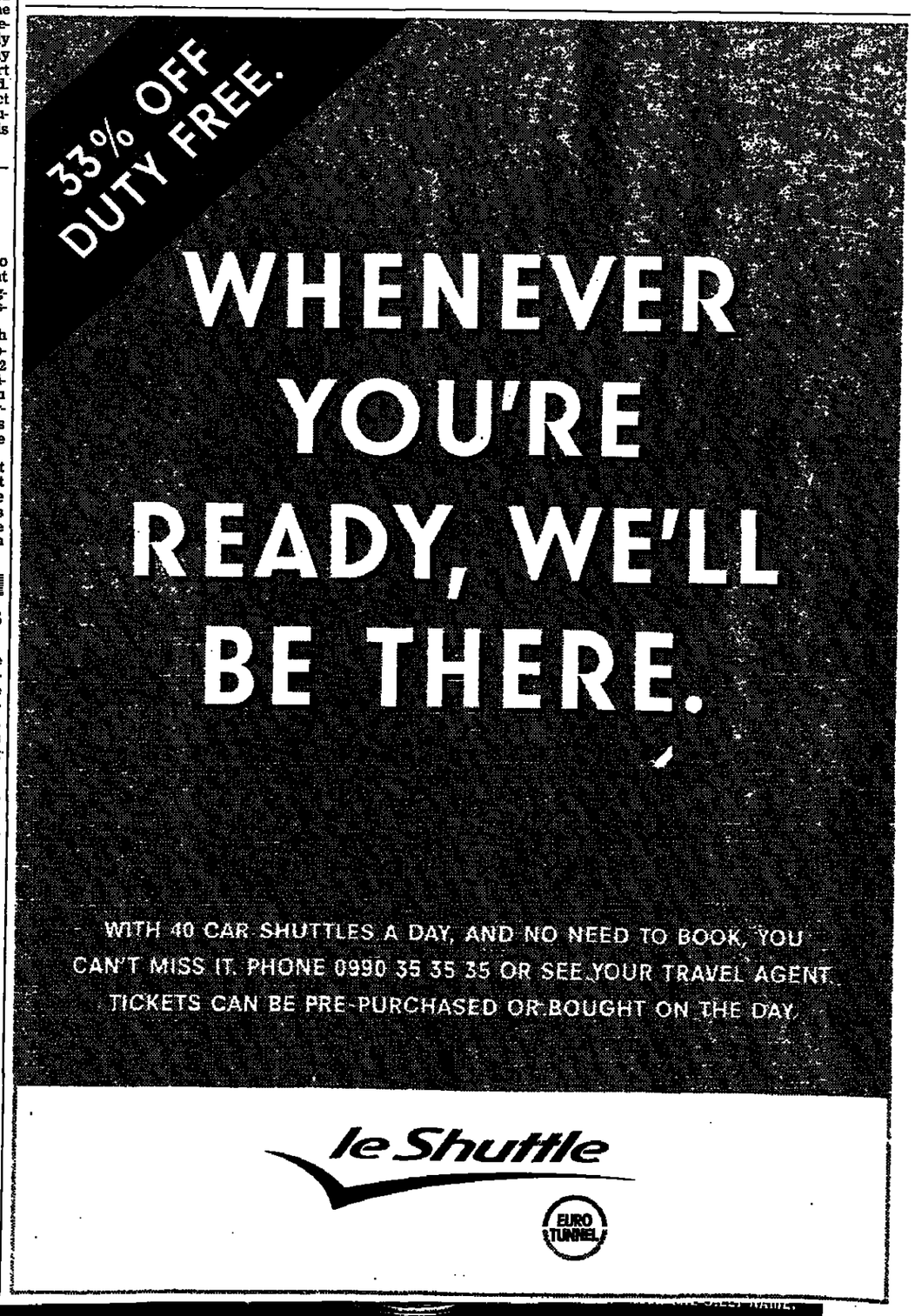
Liz Jobey, the Guardian's literary editor and chairwoman of the judging panel — Laura Cumming, Philip Hensher, Jenny Turner and Giles Foden — said Buchan was the unanimous choice.

She said: "The judges felt he had managed to write a book which combined the plot of a political thriller with the sensibility of a modern novel. He is absolutely sure in his use of the covert political forces at work in Europe during the early 1980s, a web which encloses the love affair at the centre of the book. His narrative is tricky, elliptical, almost poetic, and repays his confidence at leaving the obvious out."

Eton and Oxford-educated, Buchan worked for the FT for 12 years, including stints as foreign correspondent in the Middle East and in Bonn. Since 1990 he has been working as a novelist, feature writer and literary critic. A third novel, High Latitudes, is due out next year.

Affairs of the heart, Friday Review, page 2

It is one thing to be governed by the rule of law. It is quite another to be governed by a despotic, albeit no doubt benevolent government. And any government which seeks to make itself immune to an independent review of whether its actions are lawful or unlawful is potentially despotic.
Lord Donaldson



With the US now centre-stage on Ulster, a main player tells of the clandestine coup by the 'mighty Irish-American lobby'

Secret US foursome 'fixed' Irish trip

Senator Dodd, who spurred President Clinton to bring together Ulster combatants

Golf course key to American role

Ed Vulliamy

SENATOR Christopher Dodd timed his question carefully — at the 17th hole, with Bill Clinton playing well — on the day last February which led to the president's visit to Belfast.

At the 17th, the Connecticut senator said he thought the president should bring Gerry Adams to the White House and put the US (and Mr Clinton) at the centre of Ulster's peace process by harvesting all the players, including combatants.

The president said he would think about it.

The next morning in the Oval Office at the White House, his colleague Edward Kennedy suggested the same idea to Mr Clinton and Al Gore, the vice-president.

Mr Clinton agreed: The Sinn Fein president and his loyalist foes would be embraced, and the president would thereby become the pivot around which a peace process would revolve.

With that, Senator Dodd's proposition had become the climax of the most ambitious backroom diplomacy ever mounted by the mighty Irish-American lobby.

Unknown to Mr Clinton, the plot to bring him to Belfast started within his own election campaign with the founding of "Irish Americans for Clinton-Gore".

Steering the group were the "Four New Horsemen" of Irish America: Niall O'Dowd, publisher of Irish Voice magazine; Bruce Morrison, a former congressman; and two eminent Irish-American businessmen, William Flynn and Charles Feeney.

After the election, the group changed its name to Americans for a New Irish Agenda, antagonistic to the "special relationship" with Britain and the pro-British state department. "We were taking on 45 years of Anglo-US relations," says Mr O'Dowd.

Central figures . . . Senator Kennedy and his sister Jean

But after the historic Rabin-Arafat handshake in Washington, Mr Clinton was tempted, and cautiously adopted the "horsemen" as unofficial, secret ambassadors.

The four started taking "holidays" in Ireland, and although the President was informed of their activities their itineraries were clandestine. In fact what they did, on behalf of the White House, was to prepare the ground for all-party peace talks in meetings with John Bruton, the Taoiseach, SDLP leader John Hume, and Mr Adams.

Mr O'Dowd says they found Sinn Fein, "down on its knees . . . We were greeted like the seventh cavalry. They were desperate for some international dimension."

The "horsemen" also met loyalist paramilitaries — including the UVF's Gusty Spence and Gary McMichael, son of a UDA commander killed by the Provos — and one element in their package had particular appeal: money.

The team had been licensed by Mr Clinton to offer American funds designated for investment in jobs, North and South, conditional on peace. The loyalist ceasefire followed soon after these consultations; before long, Messrs Spence and McMichael were guests of the new Irish-American leadership in New York.

But the fund was also pivotal in the USA, to elist the business community in the process with the lure of tax breaks and profits through peace by putting their money where their hearts were.

Already promoting this notion (on Mr Clinton's orders) was Beryl Mitchell, wife of George Mitchell, the senator now chairing the arms decommissioning panel.

To convince the president, the "horsemen" needed to bring in two match-winning players.

"Our greatest achievement of all was to bring Senator Kennedy back into the axis," says Mr O'Dowd.

The Massachusetts senator, then in need of an Irish cause to champion as increasing prosperity had turned his traditional constituency towards the Republican Party, first secured the Dublin ambassadorship for his sister, Jean Kennedy Smith, who conducted her own crucial negotiations. The dealing was still so secret that the pair had code names in republican and loyalist paramilitary circles: The Big Brother and Strong Lady.

The former took Washington, along with the golfing Senator Dodd, and the latter took Dublin and Belfast. Together they brokered the dialogue. America had thus become the prime mover.

"The British could not accept they were not controlling the pace of events. The peace process had become like riding a bicycle, you had to keep going, or else you'd fall over," says Mr O'Dowd.

Then, 17 months after the "horsemen's" first trip to Ireland, Senator Dodd played golf with the President. Eighteen months after that trip, on March 17 this year, Mr Adams and loyalist leaders toasted St Patrick's Day at the White House.

And two years later, President Clinton walked down the Lower Falls Road.

'Day is over for the men of violence'

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

PRESIDENT Clinton fanned the flames of optimism in Northern Ireland yesterday with a simple but emphatic message to the men of violence: "You are the past, your day is over."

On a day of set-piece political theatre, the US president — the first to set foot in Northern Ireland — was able to spring a few surprises, going walkabout and shopping on the Shankill near the scene of an IRA atrocity which claimed 10 lives, and the Falls Road, where he shook hands publicly for the first time with the Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams.

The "accidental" encounter outside a cake shop fooled nobody but spoke volumes about the sensitivities which still surround contacts with Sinn Fein. John Major is yet to follow the president's lead and shake hands.

It was the briefest of encounters. Afterwards Mr Adams said he had told the president: "Cead mile failte (one thousand welcomes). Welcome to West Belfast." Mr Clinton replied: "Nice to see you. I look forward to seeing you this evening."

He was referring to a reception at Queen's University, where care was taken to ensure that political enemies such as Mr Adams and the Democratic Unionist leader Ian Paisley all met Mr Clinton without meeting one another.

But first there were visits to Belfast, west and east, a reception in Londonderry, and a musical interlude provided by Van Morrison outside Belfast's City Hall, where the president switched on the Christmas tree lights.

His big political message was delivered early on, at Mackies factory. Ministers were delighted with Mr Clinton's speech. "It was everything we expected," said one senior government official.

The president praised the twin-track initiative, announced by Mr Major and the Irish prime minister John Bruton hours before he arrived in Britain. "Engaging in honest dialogue is not an act of surrender, it is an act of strength and commonsense," he said to applause.

Mr Clinton condemned the punishment beatings of the paramilitaries, but added that the sinners and the sinned against must forgive one another. He said he was equally proud to be of Ulster Scots and Irish stock and his comments were sprinkled with literary references which spanned the ancient divide.

In Belfast he quoted the poet Louis MacNeice to describe the nature of the American melting pot, rejoicing at things being various. In Derry he recollected the words of Seamus Heaney. "I believe we live in a time of hope and history rhyming."

He trod a careful path between the national and unionist traditions. "I believe that the greatest struggle you face now is not between oposing ideas or opposing interests.

"The greatest struggle you face is between those who, deep down inside, are inclined to be peacemakers, and those who, deep down inside, cannot yet embrace the cause of peace. But you, the vast majority, Protestant and Catholic alike, must not allow the ship of peace to sink on the rocks of old habits and hard grudges."

The president said those who renounced violence were entitled to be "full participants in the democratic process". As a lone heckler shouted "never!", Mr Clinton added: "Those who show the courage to break with the past are entitled to their stake in the future."

With one eye on the Protestant boy and Catholic girl who introduced him to the Mackies gathering he said: "Only you can create a lasting peace. But when we see the bright gaze of these children we know the risk is worth the reward."

● Canada's chief of defence staff General John de Chastelain, aged 58, who retires at the end of the year, is expected to become a member of the international commission on the Irish peace process.

The second member will be Harri Holkeri, the Finnish prime minister between 1987 and 1991. He is currently president of the board of governors of the Bank of Finland.

Leader comment, page 8

Hands of friendship . . . Bill Clinton, the first US president to visit Northern Ireland, is greeted by well-wishers in Guildhall Square, Londonderry, where he was given a tumultuous flag-waving reception PHOTOGRAPH CRISPIN RODWELL

800 jobs from US firm give further lift to economy

Ian King

CABLETEL, the American cable operator, is to invest £600 million in Northern Ireland's rapidly-expanding economy to create another 800 jobs for the province.

The project, announced yesterday by the US commerce secretary, Ron Brown, means 3,000 jobs have been announced in the province over the last fortnight.

The project, the biggest private sector American investment in Northern Ireland in many years, will build a fibre-optic cable network to which nearly every home in Ulster can be connected.

CableTel's investment is the latest in a series unveiled in Northern Ireland this month.

Last week, the Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, announced 1,360 jobs would come over the next six years in Dunmurry, County Antrim, following a £142 million investment by Montupet, the car components manufacturer.

On Wednesday, three projects were announced, including a plastic packaging operation at Enniskillen. Together they will create 224 jobs.

Monday saw the creation of 155 jobs at Shorts Aviation's plant near Belfast, with a £5.1 million investment in new equipment and facilities, while on the same day, Sir Patrick announced a £11.8 million investment by the French tyre group, Michelin, at its plant in Ballymena.

The investments, most of which are supported by the Northern Ireland Industrial Development Board, are helping make Northern Ireland Britain's fastest growing region.

But the jobless rate is still the worst in Britain, at 11.5 per cent, against a national average of 8.1 per cent.

Universities and colleges face the risk of shipwreck as the Government cuts their budgets to pay for schools, health and the police. Read all about it in The Times Higher. Out now.

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Men over 55 face bleak employment prospects

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

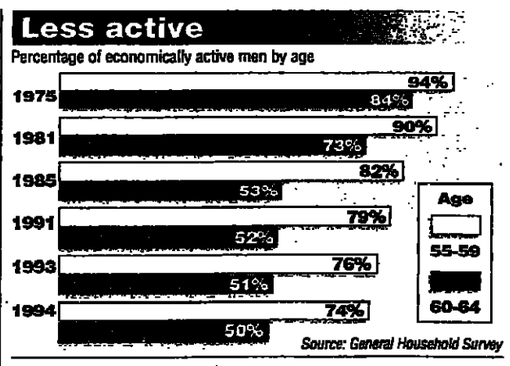
ALMOST four in 10 men over 55 but below retirement age have given up work and do not expect further employment, official figures released yesterday show.

Only one in two men between 60 and 65 considers himself still "economically active" in the sense of having a job or seeking work, according to preliminary results of the 1994 General Household Survey.

The figures confirm that men in their 50s and 60s are increasingly resigned to an early end to their careers, finding it impossible to secure re-employment once a job finishes.

In 1975, 94 per cent of men aged 55-59 and 84 per cent aged 60-64 were classified by the survey as economically active: either in work, or unemployed but having looked for work in the previous four weeks and available to start a job within a fortnight.

Last year only 74 per cent of men aged 55-59 and 50 per cent aged 60-64 were economically active.



Taking the two groups together, 37 per cent of men with up to 10 years' working life left had given up the idea of employment.

The trend among women is the reverse, lending support to forecasts that the number of women in jobs will soon outstrip the number of men.

Last year 60 per cent of married women and 46 per cent of those unmarried were classified as economically active. In 1975 the proportions were respectively 51 and 42 per cent.

The pattern has been linked to a rise in part-time service sector jobs and the decline of full-time manufacturing employment, but also it has become more socially acceptable for men to retire in effect in their 50s.

The survey, based on interviews with 18,000 people in 9,700 households, suggests that some other striking social trends of recent years have come to a halt.

Although the average size of households has fallen from 2.9 people in 1971 to 2.4, as more people live alone, the figure was unchanged between 1993 and 1994. Similarly, the proportion of families headed by a lone mother was unchanged at 20 per cent in 1994, having risen sharply from 7 per cent in 1971.

The survey shows continuing rises in the proportion of households with a compact disc player (47 per cent, compared with 39 per cent in 1993), microwave oven (67 per cent compared with 62 per cent), video recorder (77 per cent compared with 73 per cent) and dishwasher (19 per cent compared with 16 per cent).

Surprisingly, at least in view of the heavy marketing and promotion of home computers, the proportion of households with a computer remains unchanged at 24 per cent and up only slightly on the 21 per cent in 1991.

A small fall in smoking is shown by the survey, which monitors the habit every two years: 27 per cent of adults over 16 were cigarette smokers last year — 28 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women — compared with an overall 28 per cent in 1992.

Living in Britain — Preliminary results of 1994 General Household Survey: HMSO; £8.50.

BBC and ITV in soaps battle

Andrew Culf
Media Correspondent

THE BBC yesterday branded ITV schedulers spoilsports for attempting to engineer a Christmas Day battle of the soaps.

After the BBC announced its listings, ITV's network director Marcus Plantin moved an hour-long edition of Coronation Street from its previous slot to 6.30pm — into opposition with the first of two editions of EastEnders.

Alan Yentob, BBC1's controller, tried to talk Mr Plantin out of the switch in a telephone conversation, before conceding defeat and switching EastEnders.

An ITV spokeswoman said: "ITV is a commercial channel and has to be competitive. When we saw the BBC schedule with two editions of EastEnders we made changes as we reserved the right to do."

The two soaps, Britain's most highly-rated programmes, attract more than 15 million viewers.

The BBC said: "It has always been BBC policy to allow viewers the opportunity to enjoy both of British television's top drama serials, free of scheduling clashes.

"Once we saw ITV's change . . . we had no alternative but to reschedule our Christmas Day line-up in the best interests of viewers."

The BBC's retreat means the two editions of EastEnders will run at 7.30pm and 8.30pm, separated by a half-hour sit-com.

The BBC traditionally beats ITV at Christmas and despite manoeuvring, bookmakers William Hill said BBC1's One Foot in the Grave was the favourite for the highest audience. Coronation Street is 9-4, the Robson and Jerome Christmas Special 5-1 and EastEnders 11-2.

The revised BBC1 line-up is: 3.10pm Noel's Christmas Presents; 4.30 Film: Hook; 6.45 Auntie's Brand New Bloomers; 7.30 EastEnders; 8.00 Keeping Up Appearances; 8.30 EastEnders; 9.00 One Foot in the Grave.

ITV's new schedule is: 3.05pm Film: Ghostbusters II; 5.05 Wind in the Willows; 6.30 Coronation Street; 7.30 Robson and Jerome Christmas Special; 8.00 Film: Sister Act.

● ITV claimed its best peak-time viewing share this year on Wednesday with 59.4 per cent compared to BBC1's 21 per cent. Unofficial figures estimated the audience for Inspector Morse's one-off return at 15.3 million.

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Tories balk at 'weak' Nato chief

Michael White, Ian Black and Joanna Griffin

CONSERVATIVE Euro-sceptics last night launched a drive to prevent Spain's socialist foreign minister, Javier Solana, from emerging as the compromise candidate for the secretaryship of Nato.

Though John Major took a cautious stance when challenged at Question Time yesterday, Mr Solana's critics were last night circulating disrespectful articles from the Spanish press which portrayed Mr Solana as potentially a weak and malleable political chief for Nato.

With Spain eager for European Union patronage and grants, Mr Solana could become a tool of German ambitions to create a Euro-defence union, Euro-sceptics argue. "The Americans don't care because they always keep the top military job," one Tory MP complained.

Claims that Michael Portillo, the Spanish-speaking Defence Secretary, is actively warning his cabinet colleagues that they will regret not blocking the candidacy of Mr Solana, who formerly campaigned against Spain's entry to Nato and against nuclear weapons, could not be confirmed last night.

Foreign Office sources are saying there is no objection to his name, which has not been formally proposed. Downing Street admits that Mr Solana opposed US bases in Spain in the "long distant" 1970s, but says his performance in office has caused no alarm.

"Were Mr Solana's name to come forward, he would be a serious candidate," a Foreign Office official said. "We would look at it very seriously. The Foreign Secretary likes and respects him."

By way of contrast, a columnist for the Spanish newspaper, Diario 16, wrote of Mr Solana: "As foreign minister, he has left the pattern of his embrace in maps across the earth. He hugs Gadafy, he hugs those who want to kill Salman Rushdie, he hugs the ayatollahs, he hugs the killer of Yitzhak Rabin, he hugs Yeltsin, Lenin's mummy, Pinochet . . ."

The Solana issue was not discussed when President Bill Clinton saw Mr Major for two hours on Wednesday. But the president flies to Bonn for talks with the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, and Barcelona for talks with the Spanish prime minister, Felipe Gonzales, before going home. A decision on how to replace the disgraced former Nato secretary-general, Willi Claus, could be reached by Nato foreign ministers in Brussels on December 5.

Since the US blocked the Dutch ex-premier, Ruud Lubbers, and France does not want Denmark's Uffe Ellemann-Jensen for his anti-nuclear testing views, a Spanish candidate has been touted, though Spain is outside the formal Nato command.

As sceptics fear, Britain is following the US lead. It has so far refused to say whether it backs the Spanish foreign minister for the top alliance job. US diplomats have indicated that after one public dispute with Europe over the job, they wanted to keep the discussions under wraps.

In the Commons Mr Major was told by Bill Cash MP: "Mr Solana has in the past expressed views against Nato and against nuclear deterrence." Mr Major denied hearing such views or that they were Mr Solana's views.

Light fantastic . . . First Fairy Ann Hasson flies on an umbrella across the stage at Bray studios near Windsor, Berkshire, where the RSC is making its first full-length feature film, A Midsummer Night's Dream PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Britain breached European law in excluding suspected terrorists

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

BRITAIN's procedures for excluding suspected terrorists from the country breach European law, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg ruled yesterday.

The decision comes two days after the court's Advocate General decided in a preliminary opinion that Spanish fishing companies can claim up to £30 million in compensation for being prevented from fishing from British ports.

Tory Eurosceptics reacted furiously to yesterday's ruling, but the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, played it down and vowed to resist compensation claims by those excluded under the Prevention of Terrorism Acts.

The court ruled that procedures whereby suspected terrorists are first expelled and only then allowed an interview with an adviser nominated by the Home Secretary breach the right to freedom of movement guaranteed by the Treaty of Rome.

In the Commons, Mr Howard described the ruling as narrow and limited. "It doesn't go to the substance of the exclusion order making power; it goes only to procedures."

The ruling will force the Home Office to delay future decisions, except in cases of urgency, until the Home Secretary's nominee has given an opinion. Mr Howard said: "We can adapt our procedures without any difficulty.

Experts in European law said the ruling could open the way to claims by up to 500 people excluded under emergency powers. But Mr Howard said: "We shall resist, and I believe resist successfully, any claim for compensation that is made."

The Court of Appeal asked the Luxembourg court for a ruling in the case of John Gallagher, a carpenter from the Irish Republic who had been jailed in Ireland for three years for unlawful possession of firearms. He came to Britain seeking a job and worked from April 1990 until September 1991, when he was served with an exclusion order.

Mr Gallagher returned to Ireland for family reasons but later challenged the order. He was interviewed at the British embassy in Dublin by a Home Office nominee who refused to reveal his identity and gave no reason for the exclusion. Mr Gallagher denies any involvement in terrorist activities.

Charles Wardle, a Tory former Home Office minister, said the European court had made a mockery of the Government's exclusion order decisions.

Mr Gallagher's solicitor, Stephen Grosz, said he was considering a claim for compensation for his client's loss of earnings and the upheaval to his life.

Julie Wolf writes: The European Commission yesterday claimed growing support for its drive to ban tobacco advertising, despite strong opposition from the British Government. After a meeting of health ministers, Padraig Flynn, Social Affairs Commissioner, said there had been a significant step forward in forging a compromise.

Under the compromise, advertising would be banned in publications distributed outside their home country and on radio stations beamed across borders.

Commission officials said there were signs that Germany would consider a limited advertising ban, as suggested by the Spanish presidency.

This would leave Britain and its allies, Denmark, the Netherlands and Greece, without enough votes to block the measure, although they could force a delay.

Council tax 'to rise by 10pc'

James Meikle and Rebecca Smithers

COUNCIL tax bills are set to rise by an average 10 per cent across Britain and there will be big cuts in road maintenance, fire services and social services, the Government admitted yesterday.

The Government, announcing the grant settlement for local authorities in England, said rises across the country might average about 5 per cent.

The 10 per cent figure comes from the Treasury's estimates of council tax income for Britain next year — set to rise from £9.1 billion to £10 billion as central government grant increases fail to match spending increases.

Tuesday's Budget set the limit which the Government believes councils should spend in total at £44.92 billion — £1.4 billion more than last year — but £700 million less than they spent.

The Budget promised increases of £774 million for schools, £481 million for social services and £235 million for police.

But about 50 of the 274 district councils without responsibility for police or education services face cash freezes next year.

John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, told the Commons the settlement would allow councils to set tax at "reasonable levels offering protection from excessive bills" in a package "the country as a whole can afford". Capping limits would be raised by up to 3 per cent.

The actual council tax figures will not be known until councils set their 1996/97 budgets in March.

Labour claims council taxes will have to increase by £3.5 billion over the next three years, the equivalent of 2p on the basic rate of income tax.

Frank Dobson, Labour's environment spokesman, said the Government's figures suggesting a 5.2 per cent increase in council tax, combined with higher charges for other services would cost the average household £108 extra next year.

It was "just another example of the Government furtively taking away with one hand the highly publicised cuts they've been making with the other".

Local authorities said an increase of up to 10 per cent was the only way councils could actually deliver the increased spending in education and other services.

Sir Jeremy Beecham, chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said: "I think most authorities would find it difficult not to raise council tax. It bears hard on people on low incomes.

"It is not something anybody lightly does. But I think many councils will feel obliged to do it."

'Jekyll and Hyde' wife beat me, says Tory MP

Joanna Coles

DAVID Ashby, the Tory MP suing the Sunday Times for alleging he is a homosexual, yesterday denied beating his wife and claimed instead that he was a battered husband.

Mr Ashby, aged 55, broke down weeping as he told the court how much he loved his 52-year-old wife Silvana, but that she had a "Jekyll and Hyde" character and had frequently subjected him to domestic violence.

Due to his distress, the court adjourned early for lunch. During the afternoon Mr Ashby told the court how he found his wife at his block of flats on Christmas Eve with her head through the letter box of his neighbour, 32-year-old Ciaran Kilduff — with whom the Sunday Times alleges Mr Ashby is having an affair — shouting "poofters, poofters".

A row developed, she pushed her way into her estranged husband's flat and became so "manic" that she used her nails to start ripping his study wallpaper off. Mr Ashby asked Dr Kilduff to phone the police, and when they arrived Mrs Ashby set about them with the same fury.

Mr Ashby denied a suggestion by Richard Hartley QC, for the newspaper, that he had punched his wife so violently that she fell down the stairs. Often after she had attacked him, he said, her mood would suddenly change and she would cuddle him.

Mr Hartley then asked Mr Ashby if he recalled an incident when, staying at his mother-in-law's house, the plaintiff had thrown a wet sponge at his wife and then grabbed her neck until his mother-in-law had managed to separate them. "I assure you I have never rugby tackled or hit my wife or anything like that," he replied. She had also threatened to join the Liberal Party, which he found "very, very upsetting".

He tried not to retaliate, he said, but would try to stop some of the "worse excesses" by holding Silvana and bringing her to the ground so that she could not kick, scratch, grab his glasses or pull his hair.

Mr Hartley said Mr Ashby's sister, Lynne, once telephoned him at the Commons and told him she knew of Ciaran and she knew the MP was gay.

Mr Ashby said she had asked him to resign as chairman of the family companies and he had shouted at her: "You shit, you shit, you shit. You bastard, I hate you. You are a nasty little girl, now fuck off."

Mr Ashby said his wife had requested a judicial separation and £2,000 a month maintenance and he had replied by saying he would have to apply for legal aid. He said he was in negative income because of his losses at Lloyds. The case continues.

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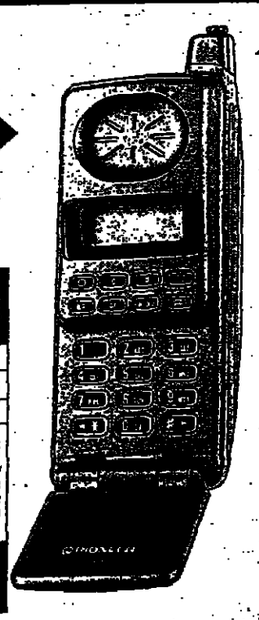

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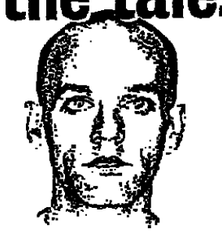

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In this month's Q, R.E.M. wax philosophical about the 132-date Monster tour that nearly finished them off. They also walk away with the title Best Act In The World Today at the star-spangled Q Awards 1995, revisited in all its full-colour, 12-page glory: the hors d'oeuvres, the faux pas and the bon mots.

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Q Out Now!

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JOHN HOOPER in Athens foresees the end of an era that was defined by polarisation and the politics of personality

'Papandreou, our father, is dying'

THE PATH cleared by police through the crowd outside the Onassis Heart Centre was drenched in the stark glare of television lights.

It picked out the smoke from the technicians' cigarettes spiralling up like incense at an Orthodox Mass: up towards the first floor and the intensive care unit where Greece's prime minister, Andreas Papandreou, lay struggling for life; up to the second floor and the little chapel with its gilded panels, its icons and tapers, where his wife Mimi is said to pray when not at his bedside.

Just after midnight, a section of the crowd burst into a chant: "Andreas, many years." A hospital official at the entrance shrugged: "Greek people like to make a noise. They don't need a good reason."

But there was a reason. The Feast Day of St Andrew, the prime minister's patron saint, had just begun. Name days are as important as birthdays in the Mediterranean. Someone had to wish him many happy returns.

All the more so in view of a rapidly circulating rumour: an astrologer in Mimi's bizarre entourage of priests and soothsayers forecast Mr Papandreou would die on his name day. The luckless star-watcher is said to have been beaten up for his impudence.

The prime minister's death can be expected to unleash not only scenes of immense grief, but also a period of political and financial uncertainty.

"Papandreou was a colossal personality, a showman, for good and bad," says Serafim Fyntanides, the editor of the Athens daily newspaper Eleftherotypia. "His shadow has always lain very heavily on his party. Its members consider him a god."

Though there is talk of a political last will and testament, Mr Papandreou does not seem to have arranged for his succession.

His Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) is split between "populists" who hanker after the free-spending policies he endorsed in the 1980s, and "modernisers" who take seriously Greece's commitment to the budgetary discipline required for European economic and monetary union (EMU).

Kiss of life . . . Greeks outside the Onassis Heart Centre kiss an icon in the hope of restoring health to their ailing leader PHOTOGRAPH:VARINKA BOSEMAN

A leader chosen from either of these factions would be vulnerable to sniping from the other. But the alternative would be to elect a compromise candidate to see the party through to the next general election, due in 1997. And that could create all the problems of a regency.

Eleftherotypia's editor admits to concern that the next premier might be undermined. But he adds: "This is a party which has two more years in power, and power is a strong adhesive."

Marios Evriviades, professor of International Relations at Athens University of Economics and Business, notes that recent months have seen Greece mend a number of bridges. "There has been a semi-resolution of the Macedonian question. The problems with Albania are manageable. And although there is talk of some sort of US initiative on Cyprus that could be extended to the wider dispute between Greece and Turkey, I don't see it being radical. It'd be step by step."

A bit of backsliding on the economy is "almost to be expected", he fears. But there are also good reasons why it should stay within bounds.

Like most of the countries in southern Europe, Greece has let itself to be lured into a tender trap. The liberalisation of international capital markets has encouraged investors to buy currencies like the drachma which give them access to the region's traditionally high interest rates.

However, their enthusiasm for such currencies is tempered by the risk of depreciation which arises every time there is a hint of anything that could lead to fiscal laxity. On the day Mr Papandreou was rushed to hospital, there was a net outglow of foreign capital equivalent to more than £300 million.

Commitment to EMU, makes budgetary stringency doubly important. "Greeks will try to get away with as much as they can. They realise they cannot get away with it forever," says Prof Evriviades, who stresses the role of the opposition.

Miltiades Evert, leader of the conservative New Democracy party, has given several indications his party is ready to endorse policies which — even if unpopular — keep Greece in touch with the rest of the European Union.

That is a huge change, indicating that what the country is bracing itself for at the moment is not merely the death of a man, but the end of a whole phase in its recent history.

The period since the fall of the Colonels in 1974 is known as "post-regime". In at least two respects, however, it has perpetuated traditions that were evident before the Colonels seized power: leadership by charismatic, autocratic old men and a high degree of ideological polarisation.

The polarisation is already diminishing. "For the first time in Greek history, there are no vast differences between the parties," says Mr Fyntanides. What now remains is for Andreas Papandreou to fade out of the picture.

Mr Fyntanides picked up Wednesday's edition of his paper and read what one of his columnists had written: "We have lived for 20 years with two fathers, Karamanlis and Papandreou. Now we have to learn to live on our own."

He put it down with a resigned smile. "That's what's happening," he said. "Our father is dying."

Greek PM faces his last battle

Helena Smith in Athens

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU faces what could prove his last battle for life today as doctors said they were preparing to take him off the respirator which has kept him alive since Wednesday.

Last night, the Socialist leader, aged 76, appeared to be losing control of vital resources with confirmation that he has suffered severe kidney failure and continues to need dialysis to survive.

"The prime minister is only breathing through a respirator but we will attempt to disconnect him from it today," said Professor Gregory Skalkeas, one of 15 doctors treating Mr Papandreou, who also suffers from a rare blood disorder, at the top heart hospital in Athens for the past 12 days.

Doctors say it is imperative that he is taken off the machine to prevent secondary infections which are common when respirators are used for too long.

Prof Skalkeas announced that a team of British surgeons, headed by Sir Magdi Yacoub, the leading cardiologist, would also be treating Mr Papandreou with a new drug — although Sir Magdi made no elaboration on this after spending the day with the Greek medical team at the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre.

The Egyptian-born specialist, who conducted open-heart surgery on Mr Papandreou in London seven years ago, was flown into Athens on the prime minister's private jet early yesterday morning at the request of the Papandreou family.

Doctors were still trying to put a positive gloss on Mr Papadreou's condition last night. "There are many problems which are being tackled, but none of these is irreversible and therefore there is no reason not to hope for an improvement," Sir Magdi said last night at the end of his lightning visit. "I am in fact encouraged by what I have seen."

But it has become glaringly clear that announcements on his health are uttered with utmost discretion and other doctors at the Onassis centre said privately that the situation was grave and only mechanical supports were keeping him alive.

The daily medical statements, made only after the closing of the Athens stock exchange, have fuelled speculation that the government is keen to avoid news of a death that could have adverse economic repercussions. The Greek bourse immediately plunged by almost 5 per cent last week when Mr Papandreou was taken to hospital with pneumonia.

The prospect of Mr Papandreou's death is also fraught because of the lack of an obvious candidate to succeed him. Although his health has declined rapidly since his re-election for a third term two years ago, he has stubbornly refused to name a successor. Last month, he shrugged off calls that he step down, saying he was still "fighting fit".

But even if the "dinosaur" of Greek politics survives, there are few who believe he is capable of returning to work. Once-loyal protégés in the ruling Pasok party have now openly begun to talk of a "post-Papandreou era".

The fight to govern Greece has already triggered fierce infighting in Pasok — the movement he founded in 1974 after the collapse of the Colonels' regime — between a host of pretenders to his throne.

The power struggle, which has seen contenders emerge from rival factions among the socialists, is expected to climax next week.

But, in a show of his continuing grip on the party, Mr Papandreou has reportedly demanded that his successor publicly embrace his influential wife, Dimitra ("Mimi") Liani, if he wishes his future to be guaranteed.

Three men have been discreetly testing support in the parliamentary party: Gerassimos Arsenis, the defence minister, Costas Simitis, the former industry minister, and Akis Tsohatzopoulos, the interior minister and a confidant of Mr Papandreou.

World news in brief

Clinton to attend signing of Bosnia peace accord in Paris

IN ANOTHER sign of his commitment to the Bosnian peace accord, President Clinton is to attend the signing of the peace treaty in Paris on December 14, it was announced yesterday, writes Ian Black.

Mr Clinton is to go to the ceremony and return to Washington the same day because of the budget debate, but his presence guarantees that other world leaders, including John Major and perhaps Boris Yeltsin if he is well enough, will feel obliged to be there too.

France's president, Jacques Chirac, will oversee the signing by the presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia.

Diplomats said that the day before the Paris ceremony foreign ministers of the five-country Contact Group will meet to review progress following a peace implementation conference in London next weekend.

Japan, wealthy Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, and international financial institutions including the World Bank are expected to make a hefty contribution to post-war reconstruction. There is expected to be agreement that the "high representative" proposed in the Dayton peace accords will be Carl Bildt, the European Union's Balkans negotiator.

After the Paris ceremony, Germany will host a conference to forge a comprehensive arms control regime for the former Yugoslavia.

'Unfair' polls in Egypt

Egypt's ruling party headed yesterday for an overwhelming victory in parliamentary elections which opposition parties said were rigged.

The National Democratic Party won 87 of the first 96 seats decided in the first round of voting on Wednesday, according to results read on state television. — Reuter.

Bomb for mosque

A Jewish extremist who planned to blow up the Dome of the Rock mosque with a grenade was detained for seven days, police in Jerusalem said yesterday. Eyal Keenan, aged 25, admitted he had intended to blow up Islam's third holiest site. — AP.

Kenyan allies

Kenyan opposition parties yesterday launched the Opposition Alliance focused on removing the president, Daniel arap Moi, from power. The conservationist Richard Leakey was named chief co-ordinator of an inter-party secretariat to run the alliance's affairs. — Reuter.

Bielarus run-off

Only 20 members were elected yesterday in the first round of a Bielarussian parliamentary election to fill 141 vacant seats. A second round takes place on December 10. Eleven independents, five Communists and candidates from other parties won seats in Wednesday's voting. — AP.

No tobacco ban

The European Union rejected proposals for a total ban on tobacco advertising yesterday but officials said many countries might accept a compromise in future. Spain proposed that countries with total bans bar publications with tobacco ads from entering their territory from those with laxer rules. — Reuter.

Drunk defiance

A train ran over the top of a German drunk who lay down between railway tracks, but he was unhurt, police said yesterday. The driver saw the man too late to brake. Police in the southern town of Nabburg charged him with endangering rail traffic. — Reuter.

Travel bar

South Korean prosecutors investigating a 1979 coup and a massacre were reported to have barred the former president Chun Doo Hwan from travelling. "We have decided to soon ban Mr Chun from leaving the country," Yonhap news agency quoted a prosecutor as saying. — Reuter.

'Counter-productive sanctions kill half a million Iraqi children'

UNITED NATIONS economic sanctions against Iraq have caused the death of more than 560,000 children since the Gulf war, according to a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation study reported yesterday in the Lancet.

"Food prices are high, purchasing power is low, water and sanitation systems have deteriorated, hospitals are functioning at 40 per cent capacity and the population is largely sustained by government rations which provide 1,000 calories per person per day," writes Dr Mary Smith Fawzi of the Harvard School of Public Health.

A Lancet editorial says governments are being unrealistic in expecting sanctions to cause Iraqis to rebel. "Western arms and diplomacy have failed to unseat Saddam Hussein. Why expect a population enfeebled by disease to do so?" — Reuter.

Saudi king enters hospital

KING FAHD of Saudi Arabia, ruler of the world's richest oil producer, was in hospital in Riyadh yesterday for "ordinary medical check-ups", the Saudi Press Agency reported.

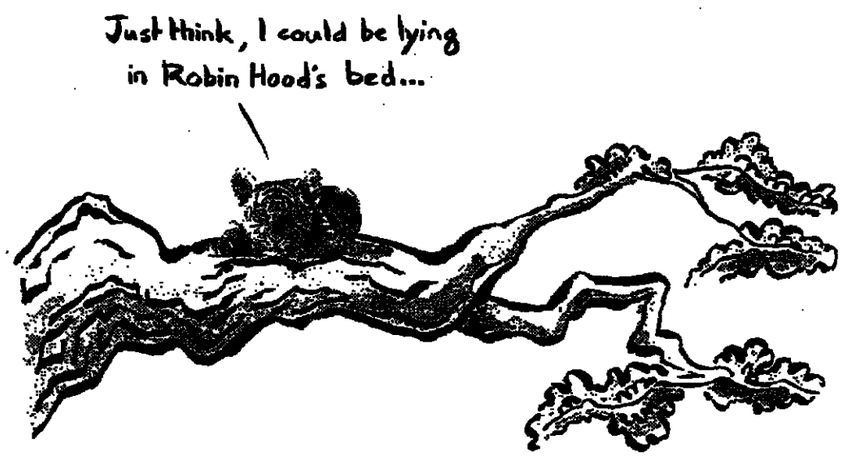
It quoted the court as saying the king, aged 73, had been admitted to the King Faisal specialist hospital. "May God protect him from all discomfort and keep him in good health," it said.

The emirs of Kuwait and Bahrain and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt were among Arab leaders who telephoned the kingdom to ask after the king's health, Saudi radio reported.

Crown Prince Abdullah, the first deputy prime minister and heir apparent, assured the Emir of Kuwait of the king's health, Kuwait News Agency said.

The court did not say whether the king was actually ill.

Little is publicly known about King Fahd's health and rumours of illness regularly circulate. — Reuter.



Charles II hid up an oak; Isaac Newton found inspiration beneath an apple tree. Some yews have been shading English churchyards since St Augustine's time, and others are older still. But then every old tree has its history, which is why we're protecting landmark trees with our Esso Living Tree Campaign. So one day our great great grandchildren shall have them to climb in, and be grateful.

The prose is tough, terse, imagistic . . . And yet it also cuts in great strips of poetry and philosophy, untranslated sometimes, and the odd flight of sumptuous word-play, albeit through ironically gritted teeth. Aesthetically, this lends the book a glorious poetic tension.
Guardian Prize winner interview

Review page 2

هكذا من الاصل

Student D'Artagnan drums up support

Eyewitness

Alex Duval Smith in Toulouse

GAEL MONNIER was having trouble fathoming the enormity of what he had created as he walked down Avenue Alsace-Lorraine yesterday with 30,000 people calling for more money for higher education.

"I did not do this, the movement did," he insisted in good leadership style, as his voice was drowned out by foghorns, chanting and insults aimed at politicians in Paris.

Less than three months ago, Mr Monnier, aged 21, was a humble third year mechanical engineering student in Toulouse. By the end of last night's television news programmes, he was almost as famous as another great Gascon: D'Artagnan.

"Radicalism is not necessarily violent," Mr Monnier proclaimed, as the television cameras turned on their lights. He held aloft his trademark "megaphone", made from a plastic binder rolled into a cone and held together with stickers. "The movement has plenty of steam. It is the government which will decide how long it continues," he said, already well-schooled in the art of the sound-bite.

After the demo, he planned to lead the students to the square surrounding the 12th century St Sernin Abbey in central Toulouse. "We will just sit there until the government makes an acceptable offer," he said. François Bayrou, the education minister, is expected to speak today.

If Mr Monnier and the 5,000 demonstrators are displeased with today's offer, he says they will extend the six-week occupation of their university, including sleep-ins by rota and free rock concerts.

Every night this week, between midnight and 2am, they have staged demonstrations with bongo drums through Toulouse. "We like to end the demos by serenading the mayor at around 3am," Anne Aragon, a first year maths student, said.

Toulouse has taken the lead in a national students' strike movement which began on October 9 when the sciences faculty at Rouen boycotted lessons and called for 12 million francs (£1.5 million) to pay debts accumulated by a funding shortage.

After Mr Bayrou gave in, the movement spread to Toulouse and, gradually, to the rest of France. The universities estimate they need £42 million to pay the debts.

Now, under Mr Monnier's unofficial leadership, protests are spreading further. Yesterday's march included civil servants and employees of the railway, post office, electricity and gas companies who are worried by privatisation plans, pay freezes and changes to the social security system.

Last night, the sound of drum beats continued to fill the streets. In the central square, jugglers performed tricks and students sang anti-government lyrics to tunes such as When The Saints Go Marching In.

Neither Ms Aragon nor her friend, Virginie Porteil, regretted that the train strike had prevented them from going to demonstrate in Paris. "We have some very specific demands for Toulouse. Besides, at demonstrations in Paris there is always trouble. We are just going to spend the evening putting up posters. The police are really nice in Toulouse," Ms Porteil said.

Passage denied ... Riot police guard a London-bound Eurostar train at the Gare du Nord in Paris yesterday after removing strike pickets. Obstacles on the track prevented its departure PHOTOGRAPH: FRANÇOIS MORI

French unrest bites deep

Paul Webster in Paris and Mark Milner

SHARES fell sharply on the French stock exchange yesterday as international confidence in the government was shaken by the sight of students, public-sector workers and railwaymen marching side by side in demonstrations throughout the country.

Traditional rightwing voters, such as lorry drivers, doctors and shopkeepers, also threatened action against the government.

The national employers' council, CNPF, urged the government to find a solution to the industrial unrest which has helped ruin hopes of an early economic recovery.

Shops were the worst hit by the continuing transport strikes, notably in the Boulevard Haussmann — the Oxford Street of Paris — where big department stores were almost empty.

Anger at government policy was reflected in demands by gas and electricity workers for an end to privatisation measures. For the first time in nine years some public utilities were cut off during the marches.

The national rail strike was almost total and there was little hope of a quick settlement. The few London-Paris Eurostar services operated by British drivers were stopped by obstacles laid on the lines. In Paris, there were no commuter trains, buses or Metros. Traffic jams beginning at 4am covered about 400 miles of approach roads during the morning rush hour.

About half the postal system was at a standstill and state communications workers began strikes in some areas.

● Up to 200,000 public-sector employees, including teachers, arsenal workers and even striking railway personnel, were paid twice in November because of a problem in the Bank of France's central computer.

The Bank refused to comment on how much money had been paid out in error and promised that the problem would be solved within the next few days.

EU civil servants up in arms over 'jobs for the boys'

Allegations of nepotism threaten scandal, reports **Stephen Bates** from Brussels

ONE of the European Union's newest institutions, the Committee of the Regions, which was set up less than two years ago with the aim of making Europe more accountable to its citizens, is under investigation after accusations of sleaze over appointments.

Allegations of political favours in the appointment of dozens of senior officials working for the committee in Brussels are being investigated by Erkki Liikanen, European Commissioner for administration. The row, which has already caused protests by civil service unions, threatens to explode the cosy relationship between EU civil servants and their political masters.

It has not been lost on Brussels that the accusations concerning up to 80 appointments to the committee involve an organisation set up by the Maastricht treaty to bring European institutions closer to the people.

Concern focuses on Jacques Blanc, the committee's president and a former governor of the French department of Languedoc Roussillon, who has brought some former colleagues with him to Brussels.

Several have been given influential positions in the committee, which was set up to ensure representation in Brussels for local councils and regional authorities and has an annual budget of more than £15 million.

"The Committee of the Regions was set up to bring the EU closer to its citizens and it is ironic to say the least that it is preventing those citizens from applying for jobs and keeping them further away," Alan Hick, secretary-general of the EU staff association Union Syndicale, said. "It is refusing to be accountable and is rapidly becoming a political failure."

Conscious of the EU's reputation as a gravy train, MEPs intend to raise their concerns in the European Parliament. They fear the activities are so blatant they will bring European institutions into further disrepute.

The unions are protesting that Mr Blanc has ignored EU civil service procedures in appointing staff by not carrying out standard advertising or interviewing practices. Two court cases questioning the way appointments are made are pending against the committee's director of personnel.

John Tomlinson, the British Labour MEP, said: "Absolutely disgraceful behaviour is going on. The activities of Mr Blanc are totally unacceptable. He appears to be intending to complete the recruitment of the committee using the worst sort of political patronage, just to make sure his placemen get jobs."

There are allegations that a senior member of staff has appointed his mistress and former secretary to a junior managerial post and that jobs have gone to relatives of senior politicians.

The fact that the posts have not been advertised externally has angered officials and civil servants who routinely face competing with thousands when posts are advertised openly.

In the summer eight administrative posts, commanding annual salaries of £50,000, were advertised internally, but then awarded to people working for the committee on temporary contracts, despite better performances in tests by seven external candidates.

Frank Patterson, vice-president of the staff union, said: "The whole procedure stinks. It is undermining the notion of an independent and impartial civil service. This is a case of nepotism, bogus recruitment procedures and jobs for the boys."

A spokeswoman for the committee said it could not afford to adopt standard recruitment procedures.

"We did not have enough money to hold a big competition and anyway it is very slow and can take a year and a half if you go through all the steps," she said.

"At the beginning, the president did appoint people he knew from France. It is not 100 per cent true that everyone knew everyone else but a lot of people had experience of working with each other. I don't think Mr Blanc memorised the staff regulations but he certainly wanted to appoint those who had helped set up the committee," she said.

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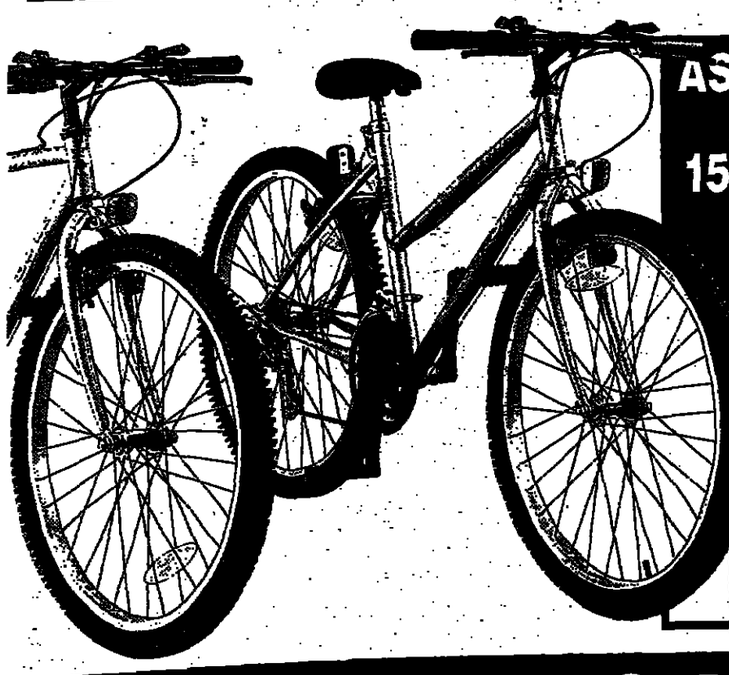

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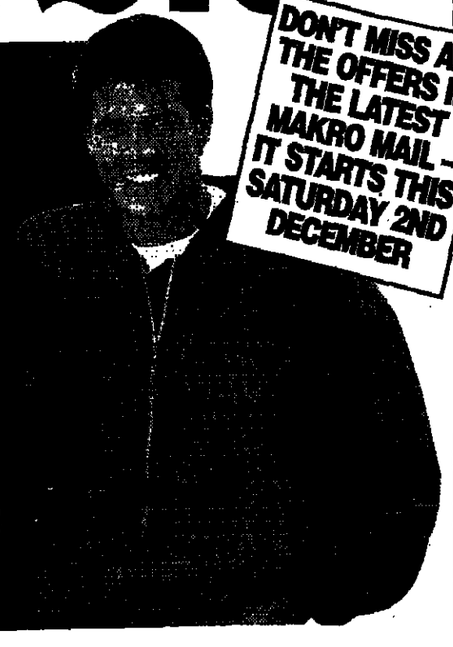

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A rich vein of optimism

President Clinton's secret weapon: words

JOHN Major should learn two lessons *from Bill Clinton's visit to Belfast.* First, to hire that man's speechwriter. Second, that the way to peace in Northern Ireland lies through the people as much as through the politicians.

In retrospect what Mr Clinton achieved yesterday was very simple but very effective. He did none of the things that old fashioned Irish republicans hoped and none of the things that congenital British unionists feared. He just went to Northern Ireland and with a minimum of complicated preconditions he lifted people's spirits and made unlikely things more possible again. He *made some excellent speeches and he* made a good ecumenical impression all round. He did it by the simple but underrated expedient of talking well, hitting the right note, using the language *as a friend rather than an enemy,* and bringing a bit of glamour and vision into the long slog towards a happier Northern Ireland.

British people find it easy to sneer when American politicians do that, but the truth is that Mr Clinton was able to put a lot of people's hopes and feelings into uplifting words. Very few politicians engaged in the Northern Ireland peace process manage this art. You can't imagine Mr Major or Sir Patrick Mayhew, or even John Bruton or John Hume pressing these buttons, let alone Gerry Adams or Ian Paisley. The only one who has come near it was Albert Reynolds, and he has left the stage. And yet speaking well to the people is important. It's one of the things that politicians are there for, for goodness' sake. It is something which British ministers are very bad at. By comparison with Mr Clinton they seem culturally conservative, linguistically constipated and politically limited. Yet his are the skills that the situation calls for. And they are doubly important in Northern Ireland, where there is a mass of goodwill and optimism waiting to be tapped, but where most politicians seem more afraid of the people than to wish to reach out to them.

It's easy for Mr Clinton, you might say. He's a here today and gone tomorrow visitor who has an electoral self-interest in pretending to the folks back home than things in Ireland are simpler than they really are. He's got a great grasp of a handshake but not a great grasp of the politics. Phooey. Mr Clinton has been the right man at the right time this week. The peace process had been bogged down in detail and position taking. Sourness and suspicion were taking over again. It needed an injection of good nature and a fresh perspective. These were what Mr Clinton provided. His arrival was a catalyst for the twin-track agreement and his presence *has made people feel that better things* are accessible again.

Throughout the long crisis in Northern Ireland since 1968 there have been occasional moments when the mass of unpolitical, non-sectarian people who simply want to live as good a life as they can have asserted themselves. But not very many. In retrospect that has surely been a crucial part of the problem. To some the peace process and the ceasefires may have seemed to be fascinating moves in a big chess game played by politicians. But the big guarantee of both has been the people. The vast majority of all people of all cultures in Northern Ireland want peace rather than war or politics. It is their manifest approval of the new era which largely prevents the politicians, armed or unarmed, from taking the situation back into the trenches. Imaginative politicians would have appealed directly to the people right from the start of the peace process. It has taken the American president to show what imagination can achieve. Let's hope the lesson lives on when he has gone.

Post early for the Chancellor

Mr Clarke must stop using the Post Office as a tax collector

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to more than double the "dividend" which the Post Office is forced to hand over each year to the Treasury is grossly *unfair and should be abandoned immediately.* It makes a mockery of the promise to allow the PO to operate in a more commercial fashion following Michael Heseltine's failure to get it *privatised.*

As a result of a little-noticed measure in the Budget the Government has raised the dividend the PO must pay from £178 million to £298 million in *1996/97 and in the following year from* £178 million to £320 million. Suddenly we are being catapulted back to the bad old days when public enterprises were regarded as milch cows by governments hungry for cash.

It is right and proper that the Post Office, one of the most efficient and profitable organisations of its kind in the world, should pay a fair dividend to its owner. But what is fair about this? As part of the new "commercial freedom" the PO's dividend payment was set at half post-tax profits. This is roughly what comparable private sector firms pay over to their shareholders as dividends. No one could quarrel with that. But the Treasury is laying down in stone the extremely high dividends the PO will be required to pay for the next two years even before it has an inkling of how profitable it actually will be. No private sector company could possibly work under such conditions. It means that the PO will have to pay these sums over to the Treasury even if it is making a loss and, as the PO hinted yesterday, it will almost certainly result in prices being increased earlier than planned. This, in turn, will reduce the PO's competitiveness at a time when it is facing increasing competition from home and overseas. Had the PO decided off its own bat to abuse its *monopoly power to boost profits for its* shareholders it would rightly be dispatched to the Monopolies Commission.

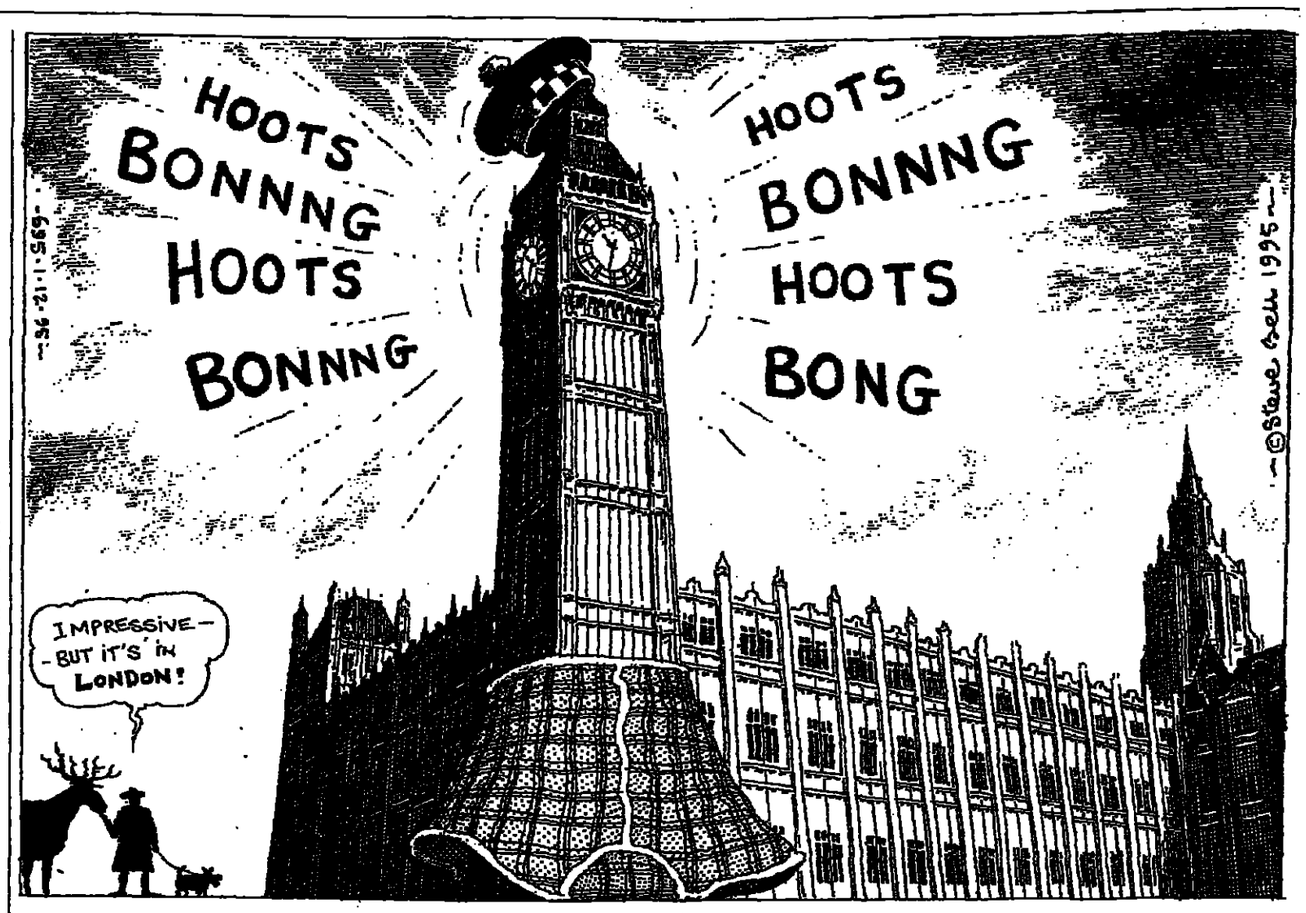
In effect the Government is, unforgivably, using the postal service as a form of surrogate taxation. It is forcing the PO to raise the price of its stamps by more than the market requires in order to help finance the tax cuts in the Budget. This is not only dishonest but *regressive as well because people too* poor to pay tax who buy stamps will have to help pay for tax cuts for the better-off. It is ironic that one of the reasons the Chancellor is short of money is that corporations in the private sector are not paying nearly as much tax as the Treasury had forecasted. In fact some of them — like Mr Murdoch's empire — are trying to kick the habit completely. To rectify this the Chancellor is raiding a successful nationalised industry. And that's the nub of it. The Government will never forgive the PO for being what it is — a world class public enterprise. Such beasts are not supposed to exist and the Government is rectifying the situation with an enthusiasm that borders on vindictiveness.

A double-edged gift for Aids Day

Better trends don't blunt the need for preventive measures

YESTERDAY'S announcement of the freeze on the health service's special allocation for Aids could not have had worse timing — the eve of World Aids Day. Yet the bad news coincides with much better news. New projections show an absolute fall (about seven per cent) in the projected spread of the HIV virus amongst homosexuals and bisexual men. Although a 25 per cent increase among heterosexuals is still forecast by 1999 this is less than half the *increase projected just two years ago.* Unlike most of the world, Britain is succeeding in slowing the spread of the virus. All those fundamentalists who objected to the Government's safe sex *campaign — and the free needles to* reduce the spread among addicts — should take note. Cumulatively, there have been 25,000 HIV infections since records first began in the early 1980s of which 11,500 have already led to Aids with 68 per cent (7,870) having already died. Proportionately, France has three times as many Aids cases and Spain seven times as many.

Ministers will argue that the reduction in cases justifies the freeze on resource allocation, but as the projections still show a small overall increase that does not wash. More seriously, ministers must ensure the Aids prevention campaign remains sacrosanct. Unlike much cancer (166,000 deaths a year) and heart disease (200,000 deaths a year), all Aids cases could be prevented with safer lifestyles. As each case costs up to £30,000 a year to treat, huge savings can be made by prevention. It is in the interests of the health service — as well as the potential victims — that the prevention campaign maintains its momentum. Sensibly, the new campaign will focus on the most vulnerable people: homosexuals, drug addicts and people from (or visiting) Africa. Every new generation needs a new message.



Letters to the Editor

This is London. Here are the cuts

THE BBC World Service is right to be anxious about the impact of the 20 per cent cut in its capital funding announced in the Budget (World Service faces £5m cut, November 30). This is the first cut ever during the course of an already agreed funding Triennium.

It could affect the World Service's ability to make it*self heard at a time when* competition for audiences is intense. Much of the capital budget is earmarked for essential investment in transmitters and satellite distribution. Although the BBC has said it will look at the scope for using the Private Finance Initiative, there could be severe difficulties in applying this to the BBC's overseas*based capital projects. It will* clearly be difficult for the World Service to raise over £5 million in the next financial year, particularly at such short notice.

The World Service's grant has already been reduced in real terms by 8 per cent since 1994/95 and many MPs on all sides feel strongly that further cuts are shortsighted.
Peter Temple-Morris MP.
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

CUTS in funding to the World Service will do *nothing but harm to this country's reputation abroad.* Whenever I travel, as an MP or private citizen, I encounter praise and admiration for the World Service. Its work and reputation must *not* be threatened for the sake of short-term fiscal considerations.
(Dr) Kim Howells MP.
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

WE *are greatly concerned* to learn that the funding for the BBC World Service is being cut. Its news service and educational programmes will be of critical importance during the coming years. This is especially significant in Africa, as the struggle to reinstate democracy proceeds.

For the long-term prospects of the UK and the Commonwealth, *it will be critical to* foster English language training and skills-transfer programmes relevant to business. All this will be placed in jeopardy unless the World Service, *and other educational* agencies, are encouraged and funded to continue their good work.
D C Thorne.
Director-General,
Commonwealth Trust.
18 Northumberland Avenue,
London WC2N 5BJ.

IN announcing the overseas-aid Budget figures, the Gov*ernment trumpets the figure of £2,154m for this year as one* of the world's biggest, while the £2,201m for 1997/8 is triumphantly proclaimed as an "increase". These figures don't compare very well with *those announced in last No*vember's Budget: £2,278m for 1996/7 and £2,328m for 1997/8. And our pitful aid budget is still less than half the UN target figure of 0.7 per cent of GNP, *even though the latter* has allegedly been a Government "aim" since 1979.
Geraldine Grey.
57d Drakefield Road,
London SW17.

THIS Government is by no means doing any favours for our 11 million senior citizens. Since 1979, pensions as a proportion of average earnings have fallen from 21 per cent to 15 per cent. Our pensions and benefits are among the EU's lowest. Regarding the increase in the state retirement pension, due next April, the Gov*ernment has no alternative but* to honour this commitment: "By law, the amounts to make up your pension . . . are reviewed once a year and when necessary increased in line with the inflation rate so as to maintain their value. The increase to take effect in April of each year."
C F Fisher.
186 Bringhurst, Orton Goldhay,
Peterborough PE2 5RU.

I AM one of those single parents, 46 and not employed. In court next week I shall be unwillingly divorced after 17 years' marriage. This follows my middle-aged, clas*sic-car-fanatic husband's move* to live with a younger woman.

I firmly believe in the nuclear family. I believe figures stating that the economic well-being of women a year after *divorce falls by 73 per cent,* whilst that of men rises by 42 per cent. The Budget shows it to be clear that I am of meagre benefit to this government. The little help I receive from the state is to be reduced in real terms whilst my husband will enjoy his hobby tax-free.

I can't change the Government, but I can attempt to persuade the judge of this injustice; and I will do what I can to influence how my children vote. I still can't afford whisky.
Anne (née Riddell).
Eckington, Pershore,
Worcestershire WR10 3AX.

NO NEED for a new charity to give schools and hospitals the money they need (Letters, November 29). Existing charitable foundations have of late been besieged — inveigled — into making up for government cutbacks.
Martin Davis.
Summerfield Charitable Trust,
25 Rodney Road,
Cheltenham, Glos GL50 1HX.

Just the tip of an iceberg

*WHERE have your corre*spondents Messrs Wilson, Geddes & Larvin (Letters, November 28) been all these years? One of the priorities of the first post-war *Labour government was to* pass a Catering Wages Act to provide a minimum wage in the catering industry and, of course, to make tipping unnecessary.

And what happened? Customers went on tipping, where, that is, they could find a catering establishment open for business. Except at the top watering holes, where expense did not matter, and family-run caffs, it was impossible to get a meal after the early evening. The Act gradually fell into disuse and was ignored, but I have no recollection of its repeal.
Clare Smith.
29 Church Path,
Emsworth,
Hampshire PO10 7DP.

MY husband has taught in prisons for the last seven years. Since the privatising of prison education he has had to work at four establishments to keep the same amount of hours as he originally worked at one prison. Now, at HMP Blantyre House, his hours are being increased from four to seven hours per week with no rise in pay. How can this happen?
Name and address supplied.

YOUR Diary (November 30) prints misinformation about our development appeal which, *far from spending* more than it has raised, has both raised funds for the society's work and substantially raised the level of the society's activities. Our finances run *from June to June; your piece* concerns our annual accounts, so you were only reflecting start-up costs.
Glenys Thornton.
Director of Development,
The Fabian Society.
11 Dartmouth Street,
London SW1.

LORD MANSON (Arena, November 28) believes that if "*sodomy between consenting* adults" is legal, why shouldn't killing animals be legal too? Quite right. What a grown fox chooses to do in the privacy of his or her field is surely none *of our business. If the animal* wishes to indulge in kinky, masochistic practices such as being chased and savaged by a pack of hounds, then who are we to impose our human morality upon it?
Alan Seaman.
Shaw Lane, Markfield,
Leicester LE67 9PW.

The art critics

AS ONE of the protesters at the Tate Gallery on Monday, preventing people from exercising their right to view two dead carcasses, I must express my disappointment at the moral bankruptcy of the Turner Prize judges and winner. The exhibit increased the demand for dead animals by two, and cheapened the life of a mother and child. The artist shoud be reincarnated as a dairy cow.
Paul Gaynor.
People for the Ethical
Treatment of Animals,
PO Box 3169, London NW1 2JF.

I NOTE that the rather odd bisected cow my son and I saw at the Tate Gallery recently lacked an udder. The implica*tions of this absent organ are* serious for the whole concept of this art work, entitled "Mother and Child". I don't know what Mr Hirst asked for at the slaughterhouse, but I *think he should consider* carefully before patronising that establishment again.

I'm afraid we got more fun out of the Gainsboroughs, *spotting Darcy and Bennet* family look-alikes.
Ann Pettitt.
Gwastod Bach, Llanpumsaint,
Carmarthen, Dyfed SA33 6LH.

THE Turner Prize . . . wasn't Turner a painter?
LA Myers.
65 Derwent Way,
Braintree, Essex CM7 8UX.

On Shore

THE comments attributed to Susan Shore's family about Foreign Office and consular support for her (Driving with the hitmen, November 27) are wide of the mark and will *needlessly undermine public* confidence in our consular services.

They contrast oddly with the written thanks we have from the Shore family. Prior to her release from prison Susan Shore wrote to our Vice Consul: "A lot of gratitude is due to you and your office; fighting on my behalf, doing all you possibly could to mini*mise my stress.*" *Susan Shore* knew from the numerous telephone conversations with our staff that, had she wanted a consular visit, she would have got one. As it was, she devel*oped a close understanding* with our Vice Consul who did indeed, personally, send Susan Shore and all other British prisoners in the Orlando area a Christmas card.
Rt Hon Jeremy Hanley MP.
Minister, Foreign and
Commonwealth Office,
London SW1A 2AH.

The unforgiven

I LOST most of my family in a concentration camp. Although I have come to terms with this, the one thing that infuriates me is when people like Lord Longford urge us "it is time to forgive" (Maligned missionary, November 27). Had, for instance, my parents survived the camps and forgiven their torturers, it would have been a virtuous thing to do. We who escaped the Nazis have no moral right to forgive. *How would Lord Long*ford like it if he were to be attacked and robbed in the street, and his friends took it upon themselves to forgive the mugger?
A Graumann.
Pendwyallt Road,
Whitchurch,
Cardiff.

YOUR profile of Lord Long*ford recalled to mind a* meeting of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, at which he was guest speaker. He persisted in referring to those present as "homosexualists" and assured us all that, although Christ was nowhere recorded as having condemned "homosexualism", He would have done so had He been asked.

When I expressed surprise that Lord Longford felt competent to speak on behalf of the Son of God, he went into a paroxysm of rage and accused *me* of being arrogant.
Henry D Robertson.
Gloucester Terrace,
London W2 6HU.

What seduced Uncle Sam

THE naïve Americans, the shifty Irish and the noble British — Hugo Young (Commentary, November 30) certainly doesn't want for national stereotypes. He seems to share the view of many people in Britain that the Irish are *somehow* messing up their "special relationship" with America. Like some coquette, the Irish are luring the Americans away from their long-standing *"sensible" partnership* with a mixture of blarney and Guinness.

Bill Clinton has very clear domestic political reasons for investing a fraction of his time and energy on "facilitating", as he terms it, a resolution of the Irish question. The makers of his election videos are already assessing which snippets can be used for their *foreign-policy-success* ad next year. Whatever his motives, however, Bill Clinton's contribution has been considerable in bringing the nationalists thus far. Gerry Adams *knows that if a bomb explodes* in London he's going to have an angry phone call from close advisers of the President of the United States.
James Mullan.
8 Berry Close,
Winchmore Hill,
London N21 2RY.

TIM McKANE'S letter (November 30) needs challenging. On what basis was a six-county unit chosen for "self-determination"? The six counties were never treated separately beforehand. They *form the larger part of the* (nine-county) province of Ulster — but Ulster too was partitioned. It is not possible even to argue that each county exercised its own right to self-determination: the County Councils of Fermanagh and Tyrone both "declared for the Dail" in the twenties, a mini-rebellion that was viciously suppressed by the forces of the northern statelet at the time.

This issue is important even now: if the unit of self-determination is to be arbitrary, why shouldn't the city of Derry, the constituency of West Belfast and even Gerry Adams's granny's house all exercise their "right to self-determination" by seceding from Northern Ireland?

As for the Conservative Party, they have always put pragmatism before imperialism. They were happy to see the 26 counties secede and remove an anti-Tory bloc from Parliament.
Bass Tyrrell.
Moate,
Co Westmeath,
Ireland.

Our fax number is 0171 837 4530. Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a daytime telephone number. We may edit letters for clarity and concision. We regret we cannot acknowledge those we do not use.

A Country Diary

NORTHUMBERLAND: Those of us who live a stone's throw from Hadrians Wall have sometimes been accused of being indifferent to its powerful influence, its amazing structure, 73 miles across the neck of England. Actually we feel both proud of the Wall and protective of it. One of the treasures of our Wall is that you can actually walk on it. Not surprising, therefore, that parts of it are falling down and having to be repaired. Trouble is that as a chunk of history, the Wall is unique and I quite understand that some of those with a stake in it (there are nearly 100 organisations and individuals concerned) now want to increase its accessibility to the public. The general idea is to double the number of visitors, two million a year already, *spreading the load* across less well-known sites. Some of the landowners who used to wish the tourists would stop walking past their dining room windows and leave them in peace, now welcome them for the economy of the district. On a drizzly day I went up to a favourite stretch of the Wall and had an hour of untrammelled walking. I did slither up and down a few steep stretches, one known as the Cat Stairs, and scrambled along a craggy bit which was quite slippery due to the sheep shit. But there is such a marvellous feeling of empathy with the Romans, a sense of history and above all it is a walk on the wild side. I never met one visitor, only a farmer exercising one of the horses he trains for National Hunt racing. "Marvellous country for getting them fit," he said. I watched him canter off up a heathery scree which must have stretched the muscles. This is the time of year when the rams are running with the ewes. One belligerent tup climbed right up on the Wall to look at us and took a shine to our dachsund, cornering her under a crag. She was capable of defending herself but I feared for the fellow's fine Roman nose if he persisted in butting her and I had to chase him off, back to his harem.

VERONICA HEATH

هكذا من الاصل

Diary

Matthew Norman

ON the day that the increase in the TV licence fee was announced, the BBC celebrated by placing a large display advert in the Daily Mail. It is seeking someone to work in its "repographics services" department. The qualification requirements are stringent. Applicants need two years' "Docutech" experience. They must have "the ability to prioritise your workload", and be able to "demonstrate a customer-care approach". (This is crucial: it was the problem with her customer-care approach, you recall, that briefly threatened the career of Linda the tea lady.) Meanwhile, although inessential, "a working knowledge of XDOD would be an advantage". On and on and on it goes, until it reaches a length for which the going Mail advertising rate is well over £2,000. Mind you, even in this age of reduced programming budgets and staff cutbacks, spending less to find the right person would be a criminally false economy. But in all this excitement, I quite forgot to mention the job title. The BBC spent 25 licence fees — or about a fifth of the job's £13,500 salary — in the quest for. . . wait for it. . . a photocopier operator. Could you make it up? I honestly don't think you could.

OUR old friends, the faxing fraudsters of Nigeria, are at it again. The latest missive, sent to a firm in south London, is from Bayo Adeola Ademola, who describes himself as an accountant at the Federal Ministry of Works & Housing in Lagos. Mr Ademola requests the requisite company details to allow him to transfer the entire contents of a bank account to another country, and promises Mr Kearney a 10 per cent cut of $33.572 million. This is all standard stuff. What gives this fax its unique savour is Mr Ademola's timely explanation for such wondrous philanthropy. The Nigerian military regime, he explains, "seeks for legitimacy and recognition by the international community".

A PARTY has been held to celebrate the departure from the Daily Express of my friend Sir Nicholas Lloyd, arguably Britain's finest newspaper editor since the man in charge of the Pudding Lane Examiner splashed with "Fire chief says it's all under control" one September day in 1666. The bash went spiffingly, until Nick was given the mocked-up front page invariably presented on such Fleet Street occasions. When he saw the headline, "Farewell Lord Lloyd!", the smile left his face instantly, and he began a protracted bout of glowering at the man responsible, his richly talented deputy Craig McKenzie. And no wonder. It would be appalling if he were denied the peerage he so richly deserves because Downing Street mistakenly thought he'd been blabbing to colleagues about an imminent ennoblement.

A NEW piece of driving legislation for Wales has thrown up a hideous legal minefield. From next April, William Hague has announced, Welsh learner drivers will be allowed to display a "D" (Dysewyr is Welsh for learner) rather than an "L" in the principality. However, as its MP Alex Carlile has told the House, one side of the main road through the village of Llanymech is in England, while the other is in Wales. Mr Carlile wonders whether it would be better for Llanymech learners to display both plates, or instead to change the plates every time they go home. It was of one day adjudicating on such pressing matters of state that William Hague must have been dreaming when, at the age of five, he so memorably addressed the Tory Conference.

THE spirit of seasonal goodwill has infected management at "Independent", who have asked not only current staff to the annual Christmas do, but also the scores of journalists they sacked this year. One of these reports being especially touched by the addendum at the bottom of the invitation. "Tickets are £5 each," it says, "and absolutely *must* be paid for in advance."

Washed up in a war of Cups and dishes

Commentary

Peter Preston

HERE'S AN acrid dislocation. Mr Rupert Murdoch, whose tax-mitigation efforts make every day a Budget Special for his empire, announces the planned birth of a 24-hour TV news channel to serve all the world. It will be, he says, more "objective" than the CNN lot. Meanwhile (same week, same world) the British Broadcasting Corporation gets the blessings of Bottomley for Charter renewal. New invocations about "due accuracy and impartiality" are enshrined in print. But, in even smaller print, Chancellor Clarke hacks another lump out of the BBC World Service. The imbecility is choking and fog beyond dismally enfolding.

Pass the night goggles and the aspirins as you inch forward one step at a time. The World Service has, infinitely predictably, got its lumps because the Foreign Office defends that budgetary patch when the Treasury bargaining gets tough. FO ministers may hymn the wonders of the English language and BBC impartiality in after-dinner speeches between Budget whiles, but at number-crunching time the choice lies between safeguarding the chaps and embassies they employ directly and a Bush House add-on which they are merely required to stump up for. No contest. You look after your own first, and pass the second-hand pain. It keeps happening. It will go on happening for as long as Whitehall plays World Service paymaster.

Step Two is that Charter renewal. It's jointly hailed by the sainted Virginia and Mr Marmaduke Hussey. The BBC (amid all the usual pothering from Tory backbenchers and the Daily Mail) is required to take more meaningless words on board. What is "due accuracy and impartiality"? Who speaks for "undue inaccuracy and rampant bias"? Fresh working parties are summoned to create revised guidelines exorcising any residual opinions that programme-makers may hold and cementing still fairer treatment of passing politicians. Since the BBC already sits atop a guideline mountain, the reasonable assumption in-house is merely of more of the same and life chuntering on much as normal. The prize, the great prize, of the exercise is different. It is the continuance of the BBC in recognisable, licence-funded form for another span of years — the salvation of the Birt tenure, with many plaudits attached.

But now the slippery path of the week offers a sudden pothole. It's Christmas, so we get the Queen rather than Princess Diana. We also get the cerebral chief of BBC1 announcing £46 million of holiday shows to a grinding script about "the public's great expectations". Hold on. Whilst Mr Yentob was hymning Auntie's Brand New Bloomers, somebody's stolen the Cup Final. To be precise: Mr Murdoch (speculating to accumulate, see above) has bought the Endsleigh League from an out-gunned ITV and the terrestrial commercials have recouped by buying the Cup. The conjunction, Charter or no Charter, could not be more menacing. It is BBC holy writ that the licence system can only be sustained if people are prepared to pay this media poll tax. You can't expect such preparedness for a patchy, minority service. Therefore the Beeb must compete on all fronts. Therefore (hearts and minds) it must win the Christmas ratings battle. But the sporting battle is already lost. No football lover this winter or cricket lover next summer can survive on Corporation gruel. And Mr Murdoch's asset-stripping, in a world the Monopolies Commission doesn't reach, proceeds inexorably apace.

By next Charter time the holy writ will be confetti — and all thinking people within the BBC know as much. Unsustainable. Meanwhile, though, just batting on from year to year has to serve. And change must be kept as imperceptible, as incremental, as possible.

> No football lover, or cricket lover next summer, can survive on Corporation gruel

Alas: change at any rate is still change. Because the politicians of whatever hue see it too they sense the weakness and the opportunity for pressure. That's what Mrs Bottomley's litany of fudge phrases is all about. That's why Mr Blair's Mr Campbell can fire off feisty faxes. That's why newspapers with other TV interests to fry can start ladling the curdled sauce of moral indignation. That's why a riveting chat with the Princess can somehow be turned into a cause for BBC apology.

And thus, I greatly, sadly fear, we face many more years of a news agenda under the siege of attrition. A mission to explain and process and package — rather than a mission to reveal. ITV (legally regulated, cost beset) has been through that mincer already. They carve at ITN budgets. They perforce replace expensive investigation shows with cheap chat shows. Only the banner of World in Action still flies consistently above half mast.

It is the same tale (occasional Panoramas and smaller flags apart) at the BBC. Great correspondents like Martin Bell can be brave and accurate abroad. They can tell us, in terms, what the Bosnian Serbs are doing. But was that mission to reveal there in Northern Ireland? What would have happened if John Maples' memo about Tory desuetude had dropped in Broadcasting House rather than the FT newsroom? What would have happened to Philip Gould's parallel tome on Labour's unreadiness?

One can hugely respect many hundreds of fine broadcasting journalists: and I do, I do. But always look for the context, for the mounting pressures. Mr Murdoch seeks to bring his own "objectivity" to the world. And meanwhile the great bank of objectivity we have, Charter or no Charter, is wreathed in mists one step beyond.

Happy days on Radio Caroline with the boys

Bel Littlejohn

LONG live rock'n'roll! This thought — this *philosophy* — has been in my head this past week, ever since the dawning of the 25th anniversary of the tragic Beatles split-up. And now with the death of disc-jockey Stuart Henry things have come full circle and the fourth square of the triangle has finally been laid to rest.

For me, the history of rock 'n' roll begins and ends with Radio Caroline. As most people know, I was out there from Day One, as studio assistant to Jack Straw, who hosted the popular "Jack-It-In" show at 2 every morning before handing over ("Hi, Dave, how's tricks?") to Dave Lee Travis ("Trix? Now, that's one groovy lady!").

Not for nothing was Radio Caroline called Pirate Radio. It was always deeply questioning of the times in which it lived, and in many ways it was the cradle for the kind of radical thought that has entered the mainstream of Labour policies under the present leadership. In fact, I think it is now safe for me to reveal that in January 1995, when Tony Blair was searching for a catchphrase by which he could demonstrate the revitalisation of Old Labour, "Caroline Labour" came second in the shortlist, only to be pipped by "New Labour", which Tony felt would have more appeal for Radio One listeners.

It's by now well known that the young John Prescott was Chief Steward on board Radio Caroline, holding court as that magnificent ship bobbed its way amidst the treacherous storms of the raging North Sea. It's an open secret that John didn't set much store by the birth of rock 'n' roll. "Blimey O'Reilly!" he would exclaim whenever a fresh photograph of the Beatles was produced. "Are those birds or blokes?" This would irritate Jack Straw, who wore his hair long, so that it came just over his collar, and with sideburns too. At that time, of course, Jack was in what I called his "Jason King" phase, all mauves, medallions and frills, though his main medallion bore the head of Keir Hardie, in keeping with Jack's socialist principles.

Ah! The memories come flooding back like ninepins. Petty Officer Prescott — as he then was — spent much of his time trying to "come down like a ton of bricks" (his own words) on those who saw fit to flout the ship's rules, particularly where dirty fingernails, long hair, loud music and illicit substances were concerned. Often he would burst into a studio while the ON AIR light was still on, forcing the DJs — Tony Blackburn, Rockin' Robin Cook, Emperor Rosko — into an all-over body-search while they attempted to carry on chatting to listeners in a convivial manner.

Basically, Petty Officer Prescott was a fish out of water, bringing olde worlde notions of discipline to the casual new world of rock 'n' roll. He always expressed a preference for the smooth 'n' easy sounds of James Last and his Orchestra ("at least you can tell he's a fella"), pouncing on anyone he suspected might be engaged in subversive activity. I'll never forget the day he found Simon Dee and Robin Cook lying on a purple bean-bag in their tie-dyes whistling the latest chartbuster by The Pretty Things, leafing through the Collected Sayings of Kahlil Gibran whilst sniffing on a joss stick. "To think I went on the Jarrow March for the likes of you," he said. "You never," replied Robin. John blushed. "I were speaking *metaphorically*," he retorted.

Radio Caroline reached out to the soul of a generation and kissed it better. Without Procul Harum's A Whiter Shade Of Pale charting at Number three, it is impossible to imagine that the Vietnam war would have ended. Suddenly, our generation realised that change — real change — comes not through speeches or direct action but through popular song. "Morning Has Broken," sang Cat Stevens; and a generation laid down its arms and learnt to love.

IT'S a lesson Old Labour, with all its talk of unions this and wage-demands that, somehow failed to master. But Tony and Harriet and Margaret and Jack know better. Unlike the older generation — Foot, Benn, Healey — Radio Caroline taught them to be at ease with themselves. These days, before every meeting of the Shadow Cabinet, Tony insists members strip down to their vests and boxers and "work-out" with Harriet Harman ("I want to see you move it to the right!") to music by Crosby, Stills, Nash, Meacher and Young. Clothes back on, we then gather round the table to recite and meditate upon Desiderata, or New Desiderata as it has become since Jack Straw applied his own particular magic to it.

"Go placidly amidst the noise and haste — and remember that the answer to life's confusion lies in drawing up a major discussion document," we say, as Tony plays the opening bars of Classical Gas on his dummy-guitar. Then it's herbal tea all round. Out of the corner of my eye, I sometimes see Petty Officer Prescott looking fidgety. "I could *murder* a Cup a Soup," he muttered last session. I sometimes think it's as if Radio Caroline sank in vain.

Beware this abuse

Lord Donaldson worries that Michael Howard's continuing interference in judicial matters could lead to despotic government

I WAS a judge for 26 years. Every morning when I entered my court I knew that whoever else might be on trial, I was too. Neither I nor any other judge would make any complaint about this. The judges are, in a sense, the representatives of society as a whole. It is right that they should carry out their duties in the full gaze of the public and that they should be judged by that public.

That said, there is a difference between informed and uninformed criticism. At one time I believed that if a judge's sentence was criticised, he had failed. Either his sentence was wrong or he had failed to explain the reasons for that sentence. I still think that this is true, but only if those criticising have attended the trial and heard the reasons given by the judge. The problem nowadays is that criticism is so often voiced on the basis of a wholly misleading appreciation of the facts based upon necessarily truncated media reports.

If matters had stopped there I would not be writing this article. Uninformed criticism is irritating and indeed depressing for the individual judges concerned, but nowadays it goes with the territory. However in recent months we have seen an entirely new development. This is an attack by politicians on the Judiciary as a whole. This is without precedent in my professional lifetime and raises very serious constitutional issues.

Our unwritten constitution, like the written constitutions of all other democracies, is based upon a separation of powers. This separation is between the powers of Parliament, those of the Government and those of the Judiciary. Parliament is supreme. The Government governs in the exercise of powers granted to it by Parliament. The Judiciary enforces the will of Parliament including the common law in so far as it has not been modified by Parliament. In so doing it administers the criminal law, and adjudicates in disputes between citizen and citizen, and citizen and the state. This is what is meant by the rule of law.

I have said that Parliament is supreme and it is. It can, if it wishes, alter this delicate balance by transferring some of the powers and duties of the Judiciary to the Executive. Such a course would, however, pose a considerable threat to the freedom of the individual citizens. It is one thing to be governed by the rule of law. It is quite another to be governed by a despotic, albeit no doubt benevolent, Government. And any Government which seeks to make itself immune to an independent review of whether its actions are lawful or unlawful is potentially despotic.

This concerted attack upon the Judiciary is clearly a prelude to an attempt to secure Parliamentary authority requiring the judges to pass life sentences, thereby transfering some sentencing powers to the Government, curbing the powers of the judges to take full account of the circumstances of individual cases by providing for minimum sentences, and limiting the powers of the courts to decide, by means of judicial review, whether the Government is exceeding the powers granted to it by Parliament.

There will be some who will wonder whether such proposed measures are dictated by an objective consideration of the public good, or by electoral imperatives. But let that pass. What could be the objective justification?

First, as to minimum sentences. Human wickedness and frailty know no bounds and every case is different. Judges are trained to evaluate this and to distinguish between wickedness and frailty. This is not to say that their duty is to administer personalised justice. Far from it. Parliament sets maximum sentences and that determines the relative seriousness of different types of offences viewed as a whole. Judges take their cue from this. By contact with other judges, they seek to ensure that offenders of comparable culpability receive similar sentences. In addition they receive and act in accordance with guidance from the criminal division of the Court of Appeal.

No system is perfect and judges will make mistakes. At one time sentences could only be altered if the accused entered an appeal. This left society as a whole with no remedy if the sentence was manifestly too lenient. This has been remedied and now the prosecution too can appeal with the agreement of the Attorney General.

SO WHAT is the need for minimum sentences? There will always be wholly exceptional cases in which an unusually lenient sentence is not only justified but required, if justice is to have any real meaning. If Parliament thinks that the Judiciary is identifying too many cases as falling within this category, the remedy lies not in mandatory minimum sentences, but in a statutory direction that judges shall only impose lesser sentences in special circumstances which the judge identifies when passing sentence. If the Attorney General considers that the circumstances were not sufficiently special, he will be able to appeal. Second as to mandatory life sentences. At present the only mandatory life sentences are for murder. There are historical reasons for this stemming from the abolition of capital punishment, although many consider that this is an anachronism which should be abolished. Judges, however, can and do in the exercise of their discretion impose life sentences when the law so permits and they are unable to determine when, if ever, the accused will cease to be a danger to the public if left at liberty. It is then for the Home Secretary, acting judicially, to decide when the criminal can safely be released.

I have no problem with the power to impose discretionary life sentences. Indeed I think that this power is essential. However, this is subject to the vitally important proviso that the Home Secretary can be relied upon to act judicially in deciding whether and when the convicted person can safely be released. This involves, amongst other things, refusing to be swayed by media and other campaigns in relation to particular cases. On current evidence, I do here have anxieties. Any increase in mandatory life sentences gives the Home Secretary additional scope for exercising the power of release politically.

THIRD, as to judicial review. Judges exercising this jurisdiction have never been concerned with whether they do or do *not* agree with the policy which dictates particular action or inactions by Government and other authorities. Their sole concern is whether it is or is not lawful. This in turn depends whether it is or is not authorised by Parliament.

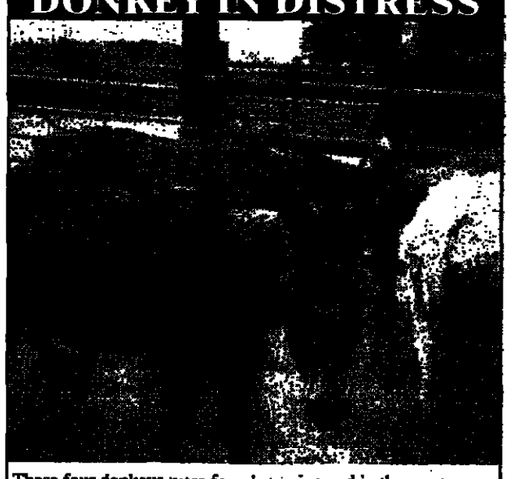
All Governments believe that their actions are in the public interest and have no difficulty in persuading themselves that they msut be lawful. To be told by judges that they are not in fact acting lawfully is an affront which they find it hard to accept. Much easier to say, and sometimes believe, that the judges are entering the political arena and are disagreeing on policy grounds.

It is true that in recent times there have been an increasing number of judicial review decisions which have been adverse to the Government. Whether this is due to the fact that one political party has been in power for an exceptionally long period and has become unusually convinced of its own rectitude, or to an increasingly careful scrutiny of governmental actions by the Judiciary or to an increasing awareness on the part of the public that they can look to the courts for protection, is not for me to say. Probably all three factors have made a contribution. Suffice it to say that if ministers think that they are being treated unjustly, they can appeal. They rarely do so.

As I have said, Parliament is supreme: If, as I think ill-advisedly, it wishes to alter the role and powers of the Judiciary, it can do so and the Judiciary will, as always, loyally conform. Criticism of individual decisions is the right of everyone, although informed criticism is preferable. What is to my mind unpardonable is to mount a campaign of abuse and criticism of the Judiciary as a whole. It can only have one certain result and that is to weaken public confidence in the judicial system. Without that confidence the rule of law no longer works and all our freedoms are at risk.

Lord Donaldson was Master of the Rolls 1982-92

PLEASE HELP A LITTLE DONKEY IN DISTRESS



These four donkeys were found starving and in the most appalling condition. They were infested with lice and their neglected, overgrown hooves made walking extremely difficult. They had been kept with horses and had suffered deep and painful bite wounds on their backs. Their fear of humans was so intense that one poor donkey threw himself on the ground, trembling with fright, when first examined by the vet.

We are now providing them with the care they deserve. We have rescued over 6,700 donkeys but there are still donkeys in trouble who need our help. Please try to spare a little, this Christmas, to help us with the immense task of giving all our donkeys the food, love, care and attention they need.

Our administration costs amount to just under 6p in the £1, so any help you can give will provide direct help to the donkeys.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THEM

Please send donations to:
The Donkey Sanctuary. (Dept EGN1),
Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0NU
Tel: (01395) 578222
Enquiries to Dr E. D. Svendsen, M.B.E.

Reg. Charity No. 264818

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Charles Warrell

I-Spy with a winning eye

CHARLES Warrell, *the first Big Chief* I-Spy, who has died aged 106, started I-Spy in 1948. Since then there have been 40 million books sold, 100 titles published and over 10,000 objects to spot. There have also been nine publishers, eight owners and seven series — all issued without any significant break for 47 years, and supported for most of their history by a parallel newspaper feature and the Redskin Tribe/Club.

Apart from a period of four years, when David Bellamy was Chief I-Spy and the series became oriented towards conservation, the tone and content of the books has remained suprisingly consistent. There's been some slight change in emphasis in "spotting" objects — the original Abbey to Zebra is now Burger to Superloo — but this series of cheap pocket-sized, well-illustrated and extremely accurate spotter books has remained much the same. The books have kept their creator's original promise that "you will never look at ordinary things in the same way again".

Although Warrell was a remarkable self-publicist, few of his biographical details are known. He described himself as a son of a West Country schoolmaster, and himself became headmaster of a Nottinghamshire school at the age of 23, where he stayed for more than 20 years. He had served in the Balkans during the first world war.

His first stories were about the school goldfish and mice, and his first published book was The Science Of The Soil (1920), followed by Sane Arithmetic For Seniors in 1937.

Belief in education as "the fun of finding out", led to his advising the Home Secretary on teaching in Borstals. For *the same reason, from 1940 he* published a series of small self-help guides: the I'll Teach You series sold three million copies — as Warrell remarked, "that's a lot of ninepences". Like so many other future money-spinners, from Sherlock Holmes to Billy Bunter, the I-Spy series was repeatedly rejected by publishers. Warrell initially published the series himself — and they were sold in Woolworth's.

At first he produced I-Spy for his own Warrell-Way series of "spotter books", the publication of which was soon taken over by the Daily Mail. Shortly after, it transferred to the News Chronicle, and, when that ceased publication in 1960 the newspaper columns went back to the Daily Mail, though book publication continued with the successors of the News Chronicle.

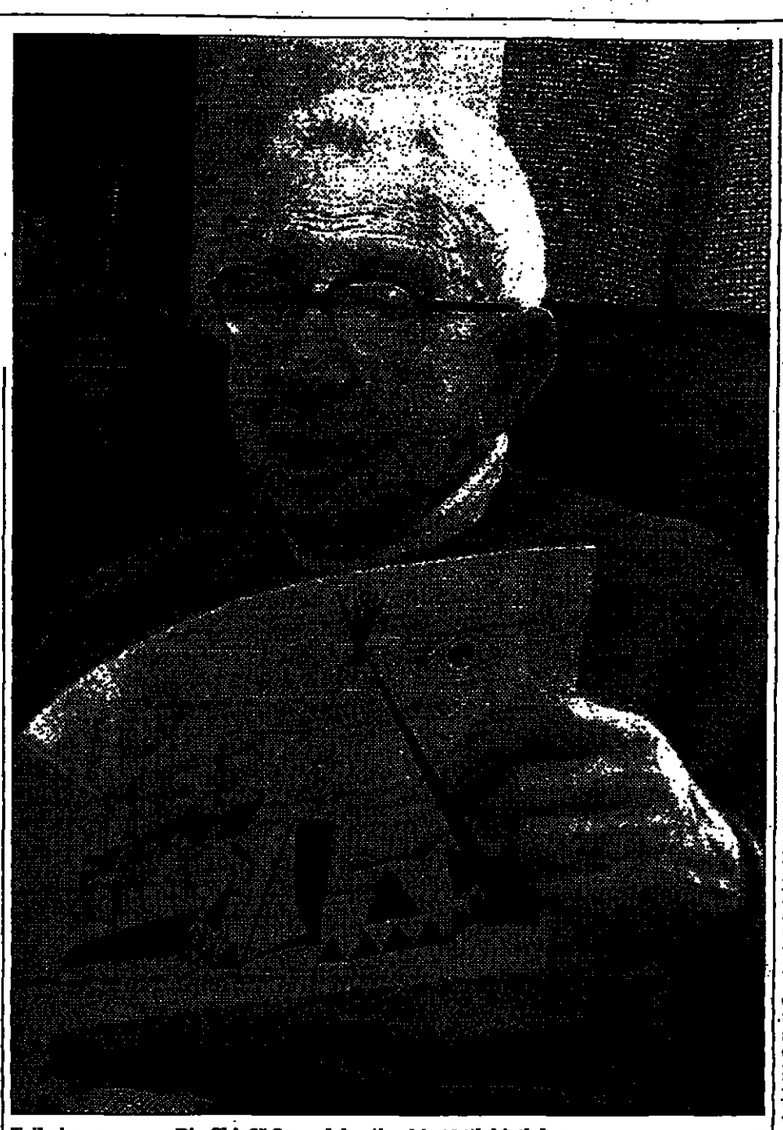
Warrell sold the I-Spy copyright around 1956-57 in England (to News Chronicle), and then sold it also in the US and Germany. As late as 1981, aged 92, he was still involved in publishing in the US. And when the new Michelin I-Spy series started in 1991 he objected to newspaper reports which described him as "the late", saying: "I'm looking round for something else to do".

The organisational aspects of I-Spy and its system of ceremonies, awards and costumes probably owe much to Ernest Thompson Seaton's Woodcraft Indians — a scouting group formed at the beginning of the century in the US — and other similar organisations, like the Camp-Fire Girls. The "spotting" books most likely derived from the tradition of cigarette cards, story papers and war-time aircraft spotting books.

It seems that not much of I-Spy was original, but Charles Warrell must be congratulated on his popular series which gave such tremendous appeal and has lasted so long.

Francis Hertzberg (Little Chief Wily-Feather)

Charles Warrell, writer and teacher, born April 23 1889; died November 26 1995



Tribal message . . . Big Chief I-Spy celebrating his 104th birthday PHOTOGRAPH: TIM CUFF

Allan Merson

The material of history

ALLAN Merson, who has died aged 79, was a stalwart of the hugely talented historians' group of the Communist Party of Great Britain from its foundation in 1946. He remained an unswerving Communist — undeterred by the changes in eastern Europe — for his entire adult life.

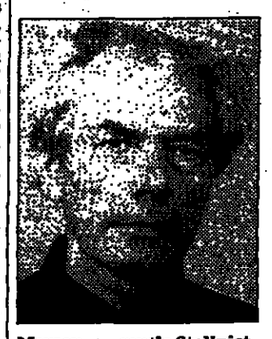
He was born in Northumberland the son of a garage proprietor, and was a brilliantly successful pupil at Newcastle Royal Grammar School. In 1934 he went up to Balliol College, Oxford, to read history, came under the influence of his lifelong friend, Christopher Hill, four years his elder, and developed the first of his specialist historical interests, in 16th and 17th century British history and the English Revolution. Impelled in part by the Spanish Civil War, he joined the CPGB. After graduating he went on a scholarship as an English assistant in a German school in Würzburg as the Nazis were taking over Austria.

After a pre-war spell as a civil servant he served in military intelligence, spending two and a half years in Iceland, editing a forces newspaper and in contact with Icelandic and British Communists. This extraordinarily mild Stalinist was demobilised as a major — and married to an Icelander.

In 1946 he was appointed a history lecturer at the then University College of Southampton, where he remained until his 1977 retirement. His sparse publications on British history were principally articles in CPGB journals but, much less heterodoxly, between 1952 and 1965 he edited three volumes of the Third Book Of Remembrance of Southampton, 1514-89, for the Southampton Record Society, and contributed Town Privileges And Politics In Tudor And Stuart England (1958) to Our History, the CPGB history group's fine series of pamphlets. Two more Our History pamphlets, Problems Of The German Anti-Fascist Resistance 1933-1945 and The Nazis And Monopoly Capital, followed in 1966 and 1973, the Third Reich being his other academic specialism. Communist Resistance In Nazi Germany (1985), the pinnacle of his scholarly career, entirely typically was a work of deep political engagement.

Allan devoted his life to the Communist movement. He was a Marxist education tutor, a member of the district committee of the CPGB and leafleted, demonstrated, and canvassed for the Southampton branch. He helped at Daily Worker and later Morning Star bazaars, and sold the newspaper on the streets.

This may suggest a humourless automaton. Yet this was far from the case. A strikingly handsome man, men and women were equally drawn to him. Totally without pretension, he provided a model for a



Merson . . . gentle Stalinist

new and better life: egalitarian, respectful of the young, gentle, mocking of hypocrisy, pomp and authority. I recall a memorable weekend in 1966 with him, his second wife, Elizabeth, and stepdaughter at their flat in the large New Forest house which was a remnant of an experiment in communal living. An all-weather wearer of sandals, he strode over the heathland with remarkable youthfulness. Allan Merson ended his life as a devout member of the hardline faction, the Communist Party of Britain. I do not pretend to understand — and do not condone — his uncritical political faith. But he was a man of exceptional character.

David Goodway

Allan Leslie Merson, historian, born August 28, 1916; died October 28, 1995

John Chant

Concern for the carers

JOHN Chant, director of social work for Lothian, has died aged 57 at the pinnacle of a brilliant career. Both his managerial competence and his skills in personal relationships made him an ideal social worker and an excellent leader. Yet perhaps his greatest contribution lay in his ability to understand the feelings and needs of distressed people and in the help he gave to those charged with the task of caring.

Yet the beginnings for John Chant were not auspicious. Born in Somerset, his mother died when he was a few days old and his father when he *was seven. He was looked* after by relatives and spent some time in care. He left school early and worked as a farm labourer before training as a nurse and then as a social worker.

He became director of social services for his home county in 1974. Under his guidance, the services in Somerset became known as efficient, innovative and sensitive to those they served. He advised in several important inquiries, notably the Cleveland Inquiry into Child Abuse, and his views were widely sought.

In 1989, John Chant was appointed to the post in Lothian, where his firm but gentle leadership revitalised his department. He continued to lecture on child abuse, always challenging police, doctors and social workers to define what was in the best interests of the child.

That he supplied a vision with an overlay of sound practical advice owed much to the influence of his early life but more to his roots in a happy and supportive family. He leaves his wife Joyce, and children Kitty, Eric and Laura. Many people in the future will be cared for better because of his care and concern.

Brian Roycroft

Leonard Ernest John Chant, social worker, born April 23, 1938; died October 31, 1995

Ahmed Abdel-Wadoud Karadawi

Planning a new role for refugees

IT IS not only refugees who will mourn Sudan's Dr Ahmed Abdel-Wadoud Karadawi, who has died aged 50. His ideas affected aid policy across the globe. He was born in western Sudan and after graduating from the University of Khartoum — he later received a masters and doctorate at Reading and Oxford — he joined the Commission for Refugees in Khartoum in 1970. It was a time when Eritreans were fleeing an oppressive government and fighting for liberation.

The seventies and eighties were crucial to African refugee policy and Ahmed's contribution, in Geneva and within Africa, forced a rethink of the role of the refugees — not merely as beneficiaries, but as resources in the planning of assistance.

His philosophy was made concrete in the Sudan. There was official recognition of the humanitarian wings of liberation groups, which allowed them to raise funds and import on the same basis as every other foreign non-governmental organisation. He also more than once threatened the "security forces" that he would report them to Amnesty over individual detentions. He saw interventions for refugees as a way also of improving conditions for their hosts.

He never compromised on principle in the interest of personal security. In 1985 thousands were dying of starvation because Sudan's President Gaafar Nimeri refused to declare a famine, and thus trigger international assistance. A BBC journalist asked Ahmed where the fault lay. With the government, he replied.

In the early eighties when the West introduced restrictionist asylum policies, he rejoindered that "donor governments should not forget that African governments are quick to learn and will follow your example." Today Rwandan refugees are trapped on the Kenya/Tanzania border and Tanzania has justified the closure of its border by citing the United States' treatment of the Haitians.

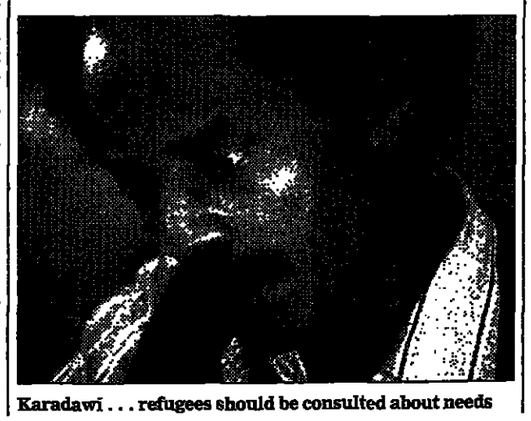
Karadawi was acutely aware of the problems created by foreign aid and foreign workers. Refugees, he insisted, should be the first to be consulted about their needs and they were the most important resource to be tapped.

Ahmed acted with cool good humour even during the direst emergencies and was a blindingly bright light for many of us fumbling about in eighties' Sudan. He promoted the integration of refugees in host societies.

His influence on our understanding of refugee issues began with his exposition of the consequences of the United Nations High Commission For Refugees camp policy, which attempted to depoliticise and confine refugees in the interest of local states. In a series of publications he argued against a refugee-centric approach which exacerbated tensions between them and their hosts and created political ferment.

He spent much of the 1980s in residence at Oxford University's Refugees Studies Programme and inspired the dream that such centres would develop globally. He also organised meetings in Sudan between the refugees and the authorities on how to tackle xenophobia and improve security.

Ahmed was an inspiration, with experience and knowledge that can never be replaced. He is survived by his wife, Selma Mahmoud Maarouf, a son and daughter, his parents, five brothers and three sisters.



Karadawi . . . refugees should be consulted about needs

Barbara Harrell-Bond

Dr Ahmed Abdel-Wadoud Karadawi, academic and activist for refugees, born October 19, 1945; died November 20, 1995

Birthdays

Woody Allen, actor, writer and director, 60; **Gordon Crosse**, composer, 58; **Mike Denness**, former cricketer, 55; **Eva Evdokimova**, ballerina, 47; **Frank Gillard**, broadcaster, 87; **Dame Alicia Markova**, prima ballerina, 85; **Keith Michell**, actor and director, 67; **Bette Midler**, singer and comedienne, 50; **Gilbert O'Sullivan**, singer, 49; **Stephen Poliakoff**, playwright, 43; **Richard Pryor**, actor, 55; **Dame Mildred Riddelsdell**, former senior civil servant, 82; **Dr Janet Ritterman**, director, Royal College of Music, 54; **David Roddan**, general secretary, Prison Governors Association, 37; **Lord Roll of Ipsden**, economist, 88; **Charlene Tilton**, actress, 36; **Lee Trevino**, golfer, 56; **Stephanie West**, classicist, 58;

Lloyd Lambert

Fifty years in the band, no flashy solos

LLOYD Lambert, who has died aged 67, was a front-rank jazz bassist from New Orleans who became known to European audiences through his rewarding association with the singer Lillian Boutte. Never one for the *flashy solo, he* was adept at providing a solid rhythmic foundation for her group, building on half a century of bandstand skill. Like many Louisiana musicians, he was equally at home with traditional jazz and rhythm and blues, and recorded with artists like Ray Charles, Little Richard, Louis Jordan and Roy Brown.

Lambert was born in Thibodaux, Louisiana, "about 59 miles out of New Orleans and a great town for having a good time". His father, the much-respected "Professor" Adam Lambert, was the first black man to teach in a local *white convent school, and* encouraged his children to play music. One son, Adam Lambert Jr, became an accomplished jazz guitarist and another, Phamous Lambert, is still active as a pianist in New Orleans.

Inspired by Bunk Johnson, the New Orleans trumpeter, and encouraged by his father, Lloyd took up trumpet in his teens and played with a local band headed by Horsea *Hill*. After trying piano and guitar he settled on bass, and joined the saxophonist Plas Johnson in New Orleans before forming his own R & B band in 1953 — he claimed to have been among the first electric bassists.

At Hill's urging he teamed up with the singer Guitar Slim (Eddie Jones), and their recording of The Things I Used To Do became a national R & B hit; this led to major tours, culminating in appearances at Harlem's Apollo Theatre.

"We drew more people than Sammy Davis Jr at that time. That's how hot that record was," said Lambert. Ray Charles, then "badly strung out" in New Orleans, was added to the band as pianist for the record session.

An alcoholic, Eddie Jones died in 1959 aged 32, an early victim of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle. Lambert was by then a sessionman with blues stars such as Big Joe Turner, T-Bone Walker and Little Richard — he played on the legendary Long Tall Sally and Tutti Frutti. "They all would come to New Orleans to record," Lambert said.

After *Slim's* death, Lambert moved to Houston, Texas, appearing with saxophonist Arnett Cobb's jazz combo for eight years and also fronting a trio. Then in 1973 he was back performing — and recording — "with every kind of band in New Orleans" before linking with Boutte, whose musical pedigree included blues, gospel and jazz. Her travels were worldwide but Lambert stayed true to his principles: "I never try to shine — I just go up and do the job. I was never out of work, you know."

Peter Vacher

Lloyd Lambert, bassist, born June 4, 1928; died October 31, 1995

Letter

Martin Ecclestone writes: Coming to Stroud in 1990, it was my great good fortune to become a neighbour — and friend — of George Ivan Smith *(obituary, November 22)* and his wife, Mary.

In his last weeks he told me how he chaired a discussion group in Australia in the late thirties, insisting that everyone should put forward positive rather than destructive views. From his hospital bed, he wrote about Africa, was excited about the Hubble Space telescope's pictures, and shared his delight in Seamus Heaney's poem about the railway children, who thought "words travelled the wires in the shiny pouches of *raindrops/ Each one seeded* full with the light of the sky . . . " To all, George communicated light and warmth.

Death Notices

COCKCROFT. Henry Keith, died peacefully at Millreed Lodge, Todmorden aged 91 on Monday November 27th 1995. Loving husband of the late Kathleen Mary, dear father of Mary, Susan, Malcolm and Robert, beloved grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral service at St. Marys Church, Todmorden *10.15am Monday December 4th.* No flowers please, donations if desired to The Home Farm Trust, c/o J & C Warburton, Broadstone Street, Todmorden, Lancs OL14 8AL.

FORTUNE (Dorothy Mary). On November 28th 1995 Dorothy Mary Fortune of "Auchrannie" Hale Cheshire aged 93 years. Dearly loved wife of the late Hugh Allan Fortune and beloved mother of Robert Irwin, mother-in-law of Susan and much loved grandmother of Mark and Laura. Funeral Private No flowers

WOLFF. Dr Simon Paul, on 25th November 1995 suddenly at home, aged 38 years. Beloved husband of Linda Hallan, devoted father to Anja and Paul-Mattias, loving son of Paul and Ursula and affectionate brother to Angela, Isabel and Matthew. Funeral Service for family and close friends at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Highgate, on Thursday 7th December at 12.00 noon, followed by burial at Highgate Cemetery. Flowers to William Noden Funeral Directors, 2 Broadway Parade, Crouch End, London N8 Telephone 0181 340 2497. Memorial Service to be announced at a later date

☎To place your announcement telephone 0171 611 9080

Jackdaw

Novel life

IMAGINE A world without radio, without television, and without film. That was my childhood in a provincial part of Europe. At that time, the impact of books was much greater than it is now, and I profited from the library of my grandfather, which was largely composed of books from the 19th century. The only atlas was so outdated that it had a big white spot in the middle of Africa. The mystery of the time was revealed to me not by Marcel Proust but by James Fenimore Cooper. Authors like *Fenimore Cooper were very* popular at the time in abridged and somewhat garbled versions for children . . .

[The novel is] an impure form. I have taught Dostoyevsky at Berkeley for 20 years. A born novelist, he would sacrifice everything; he knows no obligations of honor. He would put anything in a novel.

Dostoyevsky created a character in The Idiot, General Ivolgin, who is a liar and tells stories — how he lost his leg in a war, how he buried his leg, and then what he inscribed on the tombstone. The inscription is taken from *the tomb of Dostoyevsky's* mother. There you have a true novelist. I couldn't do that . . .

Literature is born out of a desire to be truthful — not to hide anything and not to present oneself as somebody else. Yet when you write there are certain obligations, what I call laws of form. You cannot tell everything.

Of course, it's true that people talk too much and without restraint. But poetry imposes certain restraints. Nevertheless, there is always the feeling that you didn't unveil yourself enough. A book is finished and appears and I feel, "Well, next time I will unveil myself." And when the next book appears, I have the same feeling. And then your life ends, and that's it.

The Polish novelist and poet, Czeslaw Milosz, interviewed on the on-line journal, The Paris Review (http://www.voyager-co.com/PR/p.toc.html). Milosz, who considers himself Polish, was actually born in Lithuania in 1911.

Choc mate

I STILL feel my soul-mate may be out there somewhere. Meanwhile, exploring different close relationships, I've been questioning. Why, because I have a moderately close friend I occasionally sleep with, does that make him in some friends' eyes more a "significant other" than an intimate friend who I feel for passionately? . . . Yet the people I touch, hug, give and receive massage from, laugh with . . . are these not intimate relationships too? I've also spent chosen times of passionate celibacy, trusting a rhythm that goes inward as well as outward in relationship, creating a particularly powerful chant or dance, a piece of writing, a meditation.

Camping alone or with others, making fire, carrying water reminds me of a more integrated way of living back *in my first floor flat.* I'm a non-smoker, ride a bike, don't have a car, recycle paper for both personal and business use, care for my plants, and go far enough into the darkness to see how the moon's doing. I incline towards organic veggies, do most of my work as a massage therapist on the LETS system and, when it all gets too much, binge on chocolate.

From The Challenge of Intimacy by Elizabeth Beedle in the Bristol-based "guide to positive change", The Spark. Thanks to Frank Spink.

Unsound

● Flute: "It is not an instrument with good moral effect. It is too exciting" — Aristotle.

● Harpsichord: "Two skeletons copulating on a tin roof" — Sir Thomas Beecham.

● Cello: "I'd rather listen to a bee buzzing in a stone jar" — Bernard Shaw.

● Bassoon: "Crow with a nosebleed" — E Diktonius.

● Saxophone: "A gentleman is one who knows how to play the saxophone but doesn't" — Anon.

● Accordion: "An instrument in tune with the feelings of a murderer" — A Bierce.

● Violin: "You call it difficult, Sir? I wish it had been impossible" — S Johnson.

● Clarinet: "There are only two instruments that are worse than a clarinet: two clarinets" — A Bierce.

● Trombone: "Far too holy to be used often" — Mendelssohn.

● Voice: "How wonderful opera would be if there were no singers" — Rossini.

Ten instruments insulted, contributed to Classic CD magazine by Jan Carlsson of Sweden.

Rent payments

IT WAS all right stopping down at the Embankment, down at the bridge on Villiers Street. There were always fires going and there were always plenty of blankets. Charities, and all sorts of weirdos preaching at you, were always coming down with bowls of soup, bread, sandwiches and blankets. I was with a girl, Rachel. There was a gang of us young ones and we all used to look after each other. In the daytime our gang went begging on Hungerford Bridge. Me and Rachel, they would be sorry for us; with our size, we'd just sit there, a couple trying to make it in the world. We could make £55 in an hour.

Bad noise . . . Classic CD

Normally it would be nighttime when everyone else was asleep we had nooky because it was companionship. The relationship lasted three months. When we'd finished, I started hanging out with, and then moved in with, a few young guys who were living in a squat in Peckham Park Road. We had no money and so one of the guys decided he was going out on the game and said that he was off to do a punter and get some money. I thought, well if he can do it, so can I.

We got very drunk and I asked him what I should do. I was told to always use a condom and charge £50 . . . I don't mind doing the rent, it's nothing I'm ashamed of. As far as I was concerned it was a way of survival. I didn't mind having to do the sex, or just blanked it out in me head . . .

My results came back positive . . . I was frightened to death. I started getting blind drunk every night . . . I couldn't figure out where I could have got the HIV. I'd always used a condom on the rent and they'd never broken . . . From me knowledge of how the infection is passed on it had to come from Rachel, but I never actually believed you could get it from a female. Rachel and I didn't use condoms because we were too out of our heads. There were no messages about safer sex out there on the streets and no condoms. I don't think people expected you to be having sex, while living rough.

From Madsar's story in Male Order: Life Stories from Boys Who Sell Sex by Barbara Gibson, published by Cassell and reprinted in the Big Issue to coincide with World Aids Day, today. Madsar developed Aids and died six weeks after writing this.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian-.co.uk.; fax 0171-713 4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

هكذا من الاصل

City flock approves Sheppard, page 12

Leeson faces Singapore law, page 12

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FinanceGuardian

Water companies accused of underestimating waste ● Higher charges 'could have met repair bills'

Ofwat attacks leaks failure

Nicholas Bannister, Rebecca Smithers and Teresa Hunter

WATER companies were yesterday sharply criticised by the industry regulator for failing to reduce leaks even though customers had already paid for the necessary investment through higher bills.

Ian Byatt, the director general of Ofwat, also lambasted the companies for failing to measure accurately how much water gets through their pipes to the end user.

Figures from companies such as Anglian and Severn Trent, which have invested more in monitoring delivery, indicated that some companies were overestimating water delivered and so underestimating both unit costs and leakage figures, he said.

"This summer, customers have been much concerned by the leakage figures as estimated by the inevitably uncertain methods used by the companies," he added.

Oftel had examined whether companies had achieved the leakage targets set in 1989. "In many cases reductions planned, and paid for, in the price limits set in 1989 have not been achieved," he said. Companies would now have to meet those targets from their own resources.

Last night, Labour renewed its attack on both the Government and Ofwat for failing to monitor the companies' performance. It called on Ofwat to identify the companies which had broken their promises to reduce leaks.

Shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, said Mr Byatt's report was a further illustration of how the water companies had been "allowed to get away with coining money while not discharging their responsibilities".

Ian Lang, the Trade and Industry Secretary, yesterday defended the regulatory regime in place for utility companies and said it was still in an evolutionary phase. "As the system evolves it will build a record of solid achievement," he told MPs.

He announced that the Government planned to extend competition in the water and waste water services industry, initially for the benefit of very large users such as power stations and chemical companies.

Anglian Water, meanwhile, has been accused of creaming off profits by scaring customers into buying over-priced pipework insurance policies covering risks already protected by most normal household contracts.

Insurance broker Colin Ryan has attacked it for conducting a door-to-door leaflet campaign advertising its pipework policy which costs £45 annually.

Mr Ryan said he could insure an entire house for the same price and that the water company had produced publicity literature which was "alarmist, scandalous and totally misleading" in a bid to sell their "grossly overpriced" policies. Earlier this year, Anglian was forced by Ofwat to withdraw its promotional material.

Mr Ryan conducted a straw poll of 245 homeowners to find that only five had experienced any pipework problems over the past four years, and that their average repair cost was just over £100 — although their premiums would have topped £11,000.

A spokesman for Anglian said the product was made available in an attempt to bring home to people their responsibility for maintaining their pipes.

● Over half of all low-income gas and electricity consumers using token meters have difficulties paying for tokens and have been forced to cut themselves off, according to the findings of a disturbing new survey carried out by Cardiff University, *writes Simon Beavis.*

Muddy waters . . . Swalec chairman Peter Morgan awaits Welsh Water's next move following its recent interest in making a bid PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Swalec rejects second bid

Nicholas Bannister
Technology Editor

THE PHONEY takeover war between the Welsh utilities continued yesterday when South Wales Electricity rejected Welsh Water's proposals for a "winning bid" valuing the company's shares at 916p.

The next move lies with Welsh Water which has broken off negotiations after seeing its two bid proposals branded by the Swalec management as failing to represent true shareholder value. Its chief executive, Graham Hawker, said the board would consider its options and make an announcement shortly.

Andrew Walker, his counterpart at Swalec, said he was fed up with the water company's "dithering and prevarication" since it first announced its interest in making a bid three weeks ago.

He said a lot of management time was being tied up even though Welsh Water had yet to make a formal offer. If it did not make up its mind quickly, he would consider asking the City Takeover Panel to make the water company "put up or shut up".

Swalec yesterday revealed that it had dropped its share buy-back plan in favour of returning £92.6 million to shareholders through a special £1 dividend. This would be on top of the interim dividend, which is being raised by 45 per cent to 16p a share.

First-half profits rose 12.6 per cent to £60.4 million, with a reduction in turnover being more than offset by a £20.9 million fall in operating costs.

Welsh Water dismissed Swalec's estimate that savings in tax and costs totalling only £20 million could be achieved by merging the two companies. Mr Hawker said the cost savings would be significantly greater.

Notebook

Unbundling the Hanson riches

Edited by Alex Brummer

THE transformation of Hanson from a dealing machine to a conventional business continues apace. This is evidenced nowhere more than in the imminent sale of Seven Seas, the vitamin company which is so close to Lord Hanson's heart that he has turned down several good offers for it over the years.

But that small sale is part of an upheaval which began when Derek Bonham took the reins a couple of years ago, and has some way to go.

There is the stream of disposals which has already turned the group from a quasi investment trust into a conglomerate with a small number of large businesses. These are now being run as businesses rather than clients of the head office bank, as is illustrated by talk of strategic and capital investment. A further example of the new Hanson is the enthusiasm for expanding beyond the US and UK, which were always the preferred playgrounds for Lords Hanson and White.

So Hanson is a different and intrinsically more attractive company, even though Lord Hanson is still officially at the helm. But there is a problem. The pre-tax profit and earnings per share just unveiled were slightly below the figures for 1990, even though sales have risen by more than half in the meantime and despite a sustantial bounce back from the depths of recession two years ago. There was no increase in the quarterly dividend, which remains only thinly covered by earnings.

All this helps to explain why the share price is now a third lower than its recent peak, and why it has underperformed the stock market dramatically and at an accelerating rate.

This is the major flaw in Hanson's repositioning and until there is more evidence of the promised growth, a rising share price — which was always Lord Hanson's raison d'etre — will not return.

But the refocusing also raises a more fundamental question. Why stop at slimming down to four business areas? There is no connection between them, no reason for them to be part of the same group. Hanson remains a candidate for a Hanson-style break-up. The group has until 1997, when Lord Hanson retires, to prepare defences for such an attack.

Forte fight

EVEN those who are relatively sympathetic to Forte retaining its independence would not wish it to happen by sleight of hand. There can be no doubt, as when Hanson set its sights on ICI, that the threat of takeover by an aggressive predator can do wonders to release shareholder value.

No doubt the Forte defence team are working up ideas to strengthen its hand. These might include splitting Sir Rocco Forte's role as chairman and chief executive; sweating the management; disposing or floating off non-core interests; revaluing the hotel assets and speeding up those branding reforms already in train.

Action is needed on these fronts because Granada's Gerry Robinson, like Lord Hanson in an earlier era, has so many City supporters.

It would be a travesty of the principle of shareholder democracy if, in the case of Forte, a small, unelected group of the great and the good — under the chairmanship of Hugh Astor, and including Lord Callaghan and the Duke of Marlborough — were to use their "golden share" — a holding of just 0.08 per cent — to overturn the will of other shareholders.

The Council is acting honourably in going to Chancery to clarify its duties and responsibilities. But even if its rights to override a shareholder poll are upheld, it should not exercise them.

Pension profits

YOU don't necessarily have to believe the pension funds' threat that they may stop underwriting share issues to see that there are inconsistencies in the way that profits for such transactions are treated for tax.

This week's Budget exempted pension funds from tax on stock-lending profits to facilitate a smooth market. And the 1990 Finance Act removed the threat of tax on derivatives profits for the same reason.

So, the Inland Revenue's determination to persue pension funds for the profits they make on underwriting share issues — even when those profits were sizeable and regular in the late 1980s and even though other underwriters pay tax — appears odd. Particularly so when the Government told pension funds that they would have their privatisation share allocations scaled back if they did not underwrite the flotations.

It is quite clear that the ability to underwrite quickly, if not so cheaply, an issue of shares is an important element in the smooth working of the London market. And although, most times, the underwriters and sub-underwriters can be assured of profit, this is not always the case. Remember BP in the wake of the 1987 market crash.

The Barclays Bank Pension Fund has recently agreed to settle with the Inland Revenue. But others in the industry will not go so willingly, and hundreds of thousands of pounds will find their way into the pockets of lawyers as each case is tested.

Removing the uncertainty will deprive the Revenue of very little. But failing to remove it could further dent the London market.

Fury as exchange plans order-driven upheaval

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

A BITTER row is looming between the City's leading market makers and the Stock Exchange over yesterday's decision to open up the London market to "order driven" trading.

As foreshadowed by the Guardian last week, the Stock Exchange yesterday announced plans to make London the world's only market to offer both "order driven" and "quote driven" trading.

The decision, taken yesterday by the Stock Exchange board headed by chief executive Michael Lawrence, could pave the way for the most profound upheaval in the London Stock Market since Big Bang in 1986.

The exchange believes that failure to offer the "order driven" option, which provides faster and cheaper dealing costs on some type of transactions, would risk losing out to overseas rivals. The trading system, which is almost universally adopted in other major markets, involves buying and selling shares by posting up order sizes available on an electronic bulletin board.

But significant market makers are unhappy about the speed with which the exchange has taken the decision. And several big firms believe that widespread discussions are needed in order to protect the interests of City firms which have staked their future on a quote-driven dealing system. This operated by advertising buy and sell prices drawn up by market makers who earn their commission in the "spread" between the two sets of prices.

A spokeswoman for NatWest Markets said last night: "Our priority is to have a system which maximises liquidity. But a great deal of discussion needs to take place in order to clarify what the philosophy will be and to ensure that users have technology."

Another big market maker, who refused to comment publicly, said there is "a lot of friction and discontent about this. We need to clarify the position".

Mr Lawrence yesterday admitted that the exchange had yet to decide how the system would work. But he added that the decision to reform the market demonstrated "leadership" and a commitment by the Stock Exchange to face up to the threat of competition from overseas markets. He declined to say whether there was unanimous board approval for the plans at yesterday's meeting.

A special sub-committee of the Stock Exchange board has been formed to liaise with London-based brokers in what are likely to develop into heated meetings.

Tradepoint, meanwhile, which has already started a limited order-driven rival stock market, pledged to challenge the Stock Exchange by building up its own service which would be up and running first.

Royal Bank in US merger talks

Pauline Springett

ROYAL Bank of Scotland yesterday unveiled record profits of £602 million for 1995, up 13 per cent on last year, and revealed that it was discussing merging its US operation with that of the Bank of Ireland.

The talks between RBS's US Citizens bank and Bank of Ireland's First NH, in what could be a £10 billion deal, have not been finalised. The City welcomed the news as confirmation of RBS's commitment to the American market. RBS shares rose 10p to 557p.

Chief executive George Mathewson said: "We are not relying entirely on the Bank of Ireland transaction for growth in the US."

Elsewhere, the figures were partly overshadowed by concerns over where UK profit growth would come from. Mr Mathewson acknowledged: "Next year is going to be a very competitive year — as was this year."

Peter Wood, the highly remunerated founder and chief executive of the group's insurance operation, Direct Line, said that its motor premium rates had fallen 10 per cent on last year, although they were stabilising. "Its got to be only a matter of time before common sense comes back," he said.

Mr Wood predicted that Direct Line would probably be the only British motor insurer to continue to show underwriting profits in the second half of 1995. He stressed that, despite the pressures, Direct Line's profits had risen to a record £112.2 million from £88.7 million last year.

In its main banking business, RBS highlighted a £73 million reduction in its bad debt and investment provision to £114 million.

Chairman Lord Younger said bank staff would receive a £30 million profit-share payout — equivalent to 8.8 per cent of basic salary and slightly higher than last year's payment of 8.2 per cent.

BA pensions scheme flies in face of ombudsman

Chris Barrie

ONE OF the country's biggest pension schemes has delivered a decisive snub to the pensions ombudsman by refusing to use its £118 million surplus to increase benefits for pensioners.

Pension fund trustees responsible for the British Airways scheme have voted unanimously against awarding an 8 per cent increase in pension payments to the scheme's 25,000 pensioners, despite a landmark ruling from ombudsman Dr Julian Farrand in September that the pensioners' case should be considered.

The ruling, delivered after a six-year battle, found the scheme's trustees guilty of breach of trust and maladministration over the distribution of the scheme's surplus funds.

The trustees — half appointed by BA, half by working members — had decided in 1989 to improve benefits to employees, including cutting the retirement age of male employees to 60. The interests of pensioners were not considered adequately in the deliberations, Dr Farrand ruled.

Pensioners are now being informed that the trustees have rejected their request for an 8 per cent increase in benefits, despite a valuation last week that puts the surplus at £118 million. The pensioners have suggested that the improvements to their benefits would cost £12 million.

Jenny Rosser, secretary of the scheme, said the scheme's surplus amounted to just 3 per cent of the assets. The trustees, chaired by BA chief financial officer Derek Stevens, had considered the pensioners' case at two meetings, the last only last week, and decided against improving benefits.

She said that the pension scheme's payments were already index-linked.

Accountants and solicitors 'must accept share of blame'

Maxwell trial

Dan Atkinson

TOP accountants Coopers & Lybrand and KPMG, senior City solicitors and even the English legal system must accept a share of the blame for the 1991 collapse of the Maxwell publishing empire, an Old Bailey court heard yesterday. To date, only Kevin Maxwell had shouldered his own responsibility for the collapse, jurors were told.

"People acting in the public interest are pretty far from view," said Kevin Maxwell's QC Alun Jones, after surveying those witnesses who had testified in the trial. Coopers, he said, had accepted the casual movement of assets around the Maxwell group, and KPMG, in 1988, had justified the late Robert Maxwell's grip on pension-fund investment strategy by citing the tycoon's successful record.

Kevin Maxwell denies one charge of conspiring with his father to defraud pension funds by misusing the £100 million proceeds of a share sale. He, his brother Ian and financial adviser Larry Trachtenberg, deny a second charge of conspiring to defraud pensioners by dishonestly using £22 million of shares in Israeli pharmaceuticals group Teva as security for loans.

Michael Hill QC, opening his final address on behalf of Mr Trachtenberg, said that on November 8, 1991, Mr Trachtenberg had believed the Teva shares belonged to the private Robert Maxwell Group (RMG) and that, on that day, all appearances suggested he was right in this belief.

The case continues today.

Beatlemania back in US even bigger than before

Mark Tran in New York

THIRTY years on, Beatlemania is reborn in America. The new double album, The Beatles Anthology Volume One, has sold so well in the US that it could have set the biggest first-week total in recording history.

Anthology sold an estimated 1.2 million copies in the week ended last Sunday. At an average wholesale cost of $20 (£13) per album, first-week sales in America amount to $24 million.

The success is a financial windfall for EMI-Capitol Music Group of North America, a unit of Thorn-EMI, based in London. "This is the equivalent of a movie opening," said Charles Koppelman, chairman and chief executive of EMI-Capitol, adding that the new Beatles offering had boosted sales of earlier Beatles albums to more than 200,000 last week.

Anthology has done brisk business at Blockbuster Entertainment shops, owned by the Viacom group.

"We've had to reorder new copies," said Mariesa McClafferty, a Blockbuster official. "Our stores have opened at 6am and closed at midnight because of the interest."

The album has drawn huge interest from older customers; many are buying several copies as Christmas presents.

According to SoundScan, Anthology sold 855,000 copies last week, the third biggest debut since the New York firm started tracking record sales in 1991. EMI-Capitol said that an estimated 800,000 Beatles albums were sold last week at other locations that do not report to SoundScan.

Only two albums have had bigger opening week sales, both from Pearl Jam. Vs. released in 1993, sold 960,000 units in its first seven days and Vitalogy sold 877,000 units on its December 1994 release. Both were single-disc releases with wholesale prices about half of Anthology's.

EMI-Capitol does not have global figures for Anthology, but its American debut alone has ensured financial success. Music industry executives estimate that Anthology could sell as many as 5 million units in America by January 31, generating $100 million in wholesale revenue.

Cancer drug tests boost shares in British Biotech

Paul Murphy

SOME investments require stronger stomachs than others. Ten months ago, British Biotech — generally regarded as the greatest hope of Britain's fledgling bio-technology sector — had to abandon trials of its number one prospect, an injectable cancer drug called Batimastat. Patients were experiencing unexpected side effects, including severe abdominal spasms lasting up to a week. Shares in British Bio slumped 20 per cent on the news.

Yesterday, however, British Biotech stock jumped by half — from £10.37 to £15.48 — after news that an oral version of the company's cancer treatement, Marimastat, has produced positive results. The company was floated at 425p a share in 1992.

The drug aims to inhibit the enzymes which carry disease to other parts of the body. It is being tested on eight forms of cancer, including ovarian, pancreatic and prostatic, and early human trials have showed enough benefit to continue the trials.

Marimastat still has to pass much more exacting tests and will not be ready for market for at least three years. The company is unlikely to make a profit before 1999. But yesterday's interim figures show half-year losses down from £6.6 million to £4 million.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.99	France 7.33	Italy 2,405	Singapore 2.13
Austria 14.90	Germany 2.15	Malta 0.6375	South Africa 5.45
Belgium 43.75	Greece 359	Netherlands 2.40	Spain 182.00
Canada 2.025	Hong Kong 11.68	New Zealand 2.31	Sweden 9.90
Cyprus 0.6825	India 53.97	Norway 9.50	Switzerland 1.7250
Denmark 8.30	Ireland 0.95	Portugal 225	Turkey 80,493
Finland 6.49	Israel 4.75	Saudi Arabia 5.74	USA 1.50

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

News in brief

Businessmen add to clamour for rate cut

TWO of Britain's leading businessmen yesterday added to the growing pressure for a cut in interest rates, expressing fears over the level of economic confidence following Tuesday's Budget. Lord Younger, chairman of the Royal Bank of Scotland and a former Cabinet minister, called for a rate cut while Ewan MacPherson, chief executive of 3i, Britain's biggest venture capital group, said the Budget would "not change the confidence" of small and medium-sized businesses.

Speaking in London, Lord Younger warned that the pace of economic growth had "slackened markedly" during the year, with manufacturing hit particularly badly, while the housing market remained "very slack".

Mr MacPherson, publishing 3i's latest quarterly Enterprise Barometer survey of smaller and medium-sized businesses, said business confidence had slid dramatically since September and appeared to question the Chancellor's forecast of 3 per cent growth next year. — *Ian King and Pauline Springett*

Ford plant rejects offer

WORKERS at Ford's Dagenham plant, the car maker's biggest UK factory, yesterday voted overwhelmingly against the company's two-year pay offer. The 8,000 production workers voted in a secret ballot to reject a proposed deal worth around 9.25 per cent. Union leaders said they were not surprised by the size of the decision as feelings were running high.

Meanwhile figures out yesterday showed that the number of new cars registered in Britain in October totalled 139,000, a rise of 12 per cent on the same month last year. Company cars accounted for 55 per cent of the total. — *Extel*

Booming computer sales

BOOMING personal computer markets have helped Hitachi and Toshiba to bumper profits. Both companies yesterday reported surging sales and profits in their interim group figures. Toshiba's net profits were four times higher than last year's at almost 28 billion yen (£180 million) while Hitachi reported a more modest 17 per cent rise to nearly 58 billion yen. "Profit from chips is the biggest factor," said Yoshiki Yagi, Hitachi's MD.

For the full-year Toshiba expects profits to continue rising to 80 billion yen at the net level, while Hitachi has raised its forecast from 120 billion yen to 140 billion. Worldwide demand for semiconductor chips is expected to grow by 40 per cent this year to more than $140 billion. — *Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo*

Virgin seeks air partner

VIRGIN Group's Richard Branson is in talks with several potential partners about setting up a low-fare carrier in Europe next year, a spokesman said. "We're going to be deciding quite soon if we go ahead," said a spokesman for Virgin Atlantic Airways. "It would be launched next year if we do."

Branson is looking at several sites in Europe, including Brussels, as the hub or hubs of the new service, the spokesman said. Virgin's entry would be the latest in a string of low-fare European carriers seeking to duplicate the success of US upstarts such as ValuJet, ahead of the full deregulation of the European air market in 1997. — *Bloomberg*

Reed to step down

BARRY REED is to retire as chairman of the Austin Reed Group at the company's annual general meeting next June, following his 65th birthday. He will be succeeded by Colin Evans, the present chief executive. Mr Reed will remain as a non-executive director.

Meanwhile, Fisons has announced the resignation of Stuart Wallis, former chief executive, and David Hankinson, former finance director, as directors. The company also announced the resignation of three non-executive directors. — *Extel*

Stagecoach takes to rail

STAGECOACH, the aggressively expanding bus and coach operator, yesterday re-affirmed its commitment to taking part in the rail privatisation process. The company, based in Perth, was recently criticised by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for its stakes in local bus companies in Sheffield and Strathclyde.

It revealed that it was "participating fully" in the rail sell-off in cases where it believed there were good opportunities. Stagecoach's comments came as it unveiled a 43 per cent jump in half-year pre-tax profits, to £20.7 million. — *Ian King*

New Selfridges chief

SEARS has named Vittorio Radice, managing director of Storehouse's Habitat unit, to the same post at its Selfridges stores in a move to reorganise the management of its businesses. Mr Radice, aged 38, will replace Tim Daniels at Selfridges when Mr Daniels retires in April 1996. The clothing and department store retailer has also appointed Rebecca Cotterell as a replacement to Ian Thomson as managing director of British Shoe. — *Bloomberg*

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CHRONOMAT

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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS

Community care . . . Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine visited Chelsea's St Thomas More RC school yesterday to answer pupils' questions at the launch of a Business in the Community search for the country's most successful partnership between business and schools PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

Massive debts force Hanson sell-offs

Roger Cowe

HANSON hopes to raise £2 billion from sell-offs over the next 12 months to reduce the huge debts from its summer acquisition of Eastern Electricity.

Chief executive Derek Bonham said yesterday that the disposals would help the company focus on just four business areas, which he believes can grow at more than 10 per cent a year. Hanson will concentrate on building materials and equipment, chemicals, tobacco and energy, which now includes Eastern in the UK as well as the Peabody coal operation in the US.

Mr Bonham would not specify which businesses would be sold but said "they will be the smaller companies and those which we don't think we can grow".

Top of the list is thought to be the Seven Seas vitamin company, which has been a personal favourite of chairman Lord Hanson, as well as Cavenham forest products and the propane business bought with the Quantum chemical group in 1993.

In a further sign of the group's transformation from its acquisition-driven past under Lord Hanson, Mr Bonham promised higher capital investment and international diversification.

He was speaking after announcing profits of £1.3 billion for 1994/95. But with debts of £4.7 billion following last month's payment for Eastern, Hanson failed to increase its dividend.

Mr Bonham said the board had considered a token dividend increase but had decided that would have had little impact on shareholders. "We would rather invest the money in earnings-enhancing projects," he said. He also pointed out that a special dividend had been paid after the demerger of the collection of smaller US businesses earlier in the year.

Plans to hold the dividend had been well-flagged so there were no surprises for investors. Hanson shares rose by 3p to 195.5p.

The results represented a substantial bounce back from a recessionary low. Although the pre-tax profit was below last year's figure, that was due to exceptional profits on disposals last year. Operating profits on a comparable basis were up by more than a third, due mainly to Quantum, which benefited from higher prices for its main chemicals. Quantum profits were 3.7 times last year's figure.

In the US, SCM chemicals and Grove cranes also produced much better results. But profits fell at Peabody, after allowing for last year's strike costs, and at Cavenham, which suffered from lower lumber prices.

In the UK the main business, Imperial Tobacco, pushed up profits by 6 per cent to £348 million, despite the cigarette market shrinking by more than 1 per cent. Imperial's market share rose to more than 37 per cent. The ARC aggregates business and London Brick also saw profits bounce back, but Mr Bonham warned that the depressed outlook for road building and construction, especially after Tuesday's Budget, would hit these companies this year.

Leeson faces Singapore's unrepentant legal system

Nick Cumming-Bruce examines an island where justice appears to be tempered by not much mercy

BY ANY standards, in its handling of Nick Leeson's case Singapore's legal system has functioned with remarkable dispatch.

The former Barings trader's arraignment in the subordinate court was organised for just a week after his arrival back from Germany.

Speed, as you might expect in this fast-moving Asian tiger, is something in which its judicial bosses take particular pride.

Criminal cases are now dealt with in about six months, the same time it takes to complete an appeal.

Chief Justice Yong Pung How commented in a speech to the legal community that death-row prisoners "can be disposed of by the prison authorities in about six months".

A Lincoln's Inn barrister might feel familiar with many of the trappings of Singapore's legal system, but not with the penalties.

The gallows trap door crashes open on many a Friday morning, and vandals can find themselves strapped to a wooden frame to be flogged with a brine-soaked rattan cane.

The "foolish, completely incongruous" system of juries, as Lee Kuan Yew described it, was among the first casualties of reform after he became premier in 1959, lingering a decade longer in capital cases before vanishing completely.

A raft of other refinements over the years have left those arrested in Singapore with few of the rights taken for granted in Britain.

Police must present prisoners promptly in court, but allow them no access to lawyers until they decide they have completed their investigations.

Silence is taken as implying guilt, so is refusal to take the witness stand. No recording is made of police interrogation.

More dramatic are the powers that allow the state to detain thousands of suspects without trial.

A draconian Internal Security Act, framed by the British to combat communist subversion with the help of detention without trial, remains in force as a harsh deterrent to active dissent.

A thousand or more Singaporeans are held under the Criminal Law Temporary Provisions Act, designed to break the back of Chinese secret societies by allowing police to seize suspects in cases of criminal violence where there is insufficient evidence to secure a conviction.

Several thousand addicts are held under the Misuse of Drugs Act and even beggars can be packed off to welfare homes.

"For him it's not law and order that's important, it's order and law," JB Jeyaretnam, for many years Singapore's only opposition MP, says of Mr Lee.

"If justice suffers, it's a risk we can take, provided order is maintained."

Three decades of meteoric growth and a standard of living now higher than Britain's leave Singapore's leaders unrepentant in the face of what they dismiss as the carping of the soft-headed, and increasingly confident they offer a model appropriate to former colonial or imperial powers.

GrandMet architect finally unsurprising

Outlook

Lisa Buckingham

GRAND Metropolitan, the food and drinks giant whose brands range from Smirnoff vodka to *Haagen-Dazs* ice cream, looks likely finally to win acceptance with big City investors just as the architect of the group's strategy takes his final bow.

Lord Sheppard, the group's chairman who stands down at the next AGM and has never been a City darling, acknowledged as much when he unveiled financial results yesterday. "The big surprise this year is that there are no surprises," he said. Profits were lower than the year before but, at least, there was little to perplex the market, which pushed up the company's shares by 8p to 442p.

There was, of course, more to the City's approval than a simple absence of shock from a group which has bought 26 companies for about £6 billion and sold a similar number of enterprises for about the same value over the past eight years.

Although headline profits, before exceptional items, fell by 3.5 per cent to £912 million, the decline was clearly attributable to one-off factors. About £71 million of profit disappeared when GrandMet lost the agency for Absolut vodka and Grand Marnier. Another £22 million was hewn by adverse currency movements. Without these, profits would have risen by £60 million or 6.3 per cent.

GrandMet

Stock market value	£9.3bn
Share price	442p ▲ 8p
Workforce	87,200
Interest cover	6.4

Main activity: One of the world's biggest drinks companies with brands like J&B and Smirnoff. Major foods group owning Burger King, Pillsbury, Haagen-Dazs.

YEAR	£	% change
Sales	[illegible]	3
Pre-tax profit	912m	-3.5*
Earnings/share	29.8p	-7.5*
Dividend	14.9p	6.8

*Excludes exceptionals

GrandMet did buy Pet, which owns the El Paso brand of Mexican eats, for £1.7 billion last year. And, as soon as its American eye care chain, Pearle, is making enough money it will be sold. But yesterday's results made it clear that the underlying strategy and performance of the group are on course. Organic growth is replacing financial engineering.

The packaged food business — largely Pillsbury — turned in a profit growth of 54 per cent to £358 million. Burger King is also set for underlying profits growth this year of about 6 per cent on last year's £205 million.

Food, which now accounts for 55 per cent of earnings, was the first of GrandMet's significant operations to be restructured and to be subject to what appears to have become the corporate chant: cut out surplus cost; invest those savings plus a bit to promote existing brands; research and develop new brands; expand any winning formulae into new markets; and make small strategic acquisitions.

The IDV drinks business came to this strategy later than food — although it is ahead of such major competitors as Guinness and Allied Domecq — and as the benefits of this approach filter through it would not be surprising to see IDV improve current-year profits by 4 per cent in what remains a stagnant global drinks market.

The thinking is all beginning to become clear and, what's more, it looks as though it's working. Advertise to persuade punters of the value of your product and then put up the price.

Nascent City fans should not, however, be too quick to dismiss Lord Sheppard's deal making — he did manage to get out of hotels with the £1.2 billion sale of Inter-Continental at the top of the market, sold the Chef & Brewer pubs for what many regarded as a fancy £736 million and flogged Express Dairy/Eden Vale for £360 million just as the milk market was deregulated. It may have been hard to understand, and it could all have gone wrong. But it did provide an element of fun.

The Underside

Dan Atkinson

THE transformation of Labour's PR machine from the 1980s equivalent of the Italian army into the 1990s propaganda version of the Paras proceeds apace, as Andrew Dilnot, the director of the Institute of Fiscal Studies, has found to his cost.

Within hours of Mr Dilnot claiming that Gordon Brown's plans for a 10 per cent lower rate of tax were a gimmick (surely not?) he was being comprehesively sandbagged by "committee to re-elect" types at Walworth Road.

As well as casting doubt over the quality of Mr Dilnot's Oxford degree, it was claimed he was being ditched from the BBC's Budget day coverage for being too political, or, alternatively, that he was trying to prove he was right-wing enough to be Peter Jay's successor as the BBC's Economics Editor.

"Next thing," said Mr Dilnot wearily, "they'll be suggesting I molest my kids." Give them time, Andrew, give them time.

KENNETH Clarke's reign as Mr Three Pints is over, pro tem. You may remember his Budget debut in the winter of 1993 was marked by 7p

in the pound-worth of tax rises, memorably dismissed by the Chancellor as the equivalent of a mere three pints of ale a week for the average household. This week's penny cut trims down his pick-pocketing to a mere two pints, 11 fluid ounces.

Meanwhile, Tory propagandists, by slinging in the rise in average earnings, are suggesting the Budget's true barrelage is, in fact, closer to a gain of £9 a week, or between five and six pints up, a turnaround on the 1993 trough of more than a gallon. *Funny things, statistics.*

THE mysterious, all-powerful Council of Forte — two knights, an Hon, an earl, a duke and three lords — met on Wednesday to discuss the Granada bid. It could have picked any of a number of swish Forte/Savoy hotels, but, with great impartiality, spurned the Waldorf, the Savoy et al in favour of "one of the member's flats, actually", according to an embarrassed flunkey.

CONFUSING signals from the front-line in the class war: from Saturday, Harrods' beer and lager will be available in Tesco, the first occasion on which the top people's department store has permitted an oiky old grocer to stack its products.

Does this mean (a) that Tesco, once famed for piling-it-high, has succeeded in reaching the up-est reaches of upmarket, or (b) that once-proud Harrods is now a glorified supermarket with an elephant-ordering service attached?

THE Saatchi brothers, meanwhile, are set to own 7.3 per cent of the Dukes Dene golf course in Surrey. The Saatchis hold a stake in Ex-Lands, the property group, which is demerging golf-course operator Clubhaus, a company with interests in courses in Frankfurt, Vichy, Brussels, *Stuttgart*, Hamburg and London.

Headed by the exotic-sounding Alexander Baron von Spoercken, Clubhaus is coming to market. Should the Saatchis fancy a game, they should note that three of the courses have yet to open.

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£25,000+	6.75%	5.06%
£5,000 (minimum)+	6.70%	5.03%
INTEREST PAID MONTHLY		
£100,000+	6.69%	5.02%
£50,000+	6.60%	4.95%
£25,000+	6.55%	4.91%
£5,000 (minimum)+	6.50%	4.88%

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Soccer

Gazza escapes with match ban

Patrick Glenn

THE expected Bloody Assizes did not materialise at the Scottish FA's disciplinary hearing yesterday, when Paul Gascoigne and his Rangers team-mate John Brown each received a one-match suspension for bringing the game into disrepute.

But prosecution by the Procurator Fiscal became a distinct possibility when it was learned that Alan McLaren of Rangers and Aberdeen's Billy Dodds had both been cautioned by police inquiring into the match at Ibrox on November 11.

The SFA's case against McLaren and Dodds was deferred "at the players' special request" when the disciplinary committee were apprised of "aspects of their involvement in another area".

A police spokesman said: "Although no report has yet gone to the Procurator Fiscal, several witnesses have been interviewed at both clubs, some under caution, and our inquiries are continuing."

It is understood that Gascoigne, who is alleged to have been involved in several incidents, and Brown, who was reported by the SFA's supervisor to have been party to the incident with McLaren and Dodds, have yet to be seen by the police.

The leniency of the football authorities' sentences on Gascoigne and Brown left most observers mystified, not least because a disrepute conviction normally carries a heavier punishment. Alan Lawrence, the Heart of Midlothianstriker found guilty of elbowing Rangers' Craig Moore, and Airdrie's Sean Sweeney, who kicked Dundee's Morten Wieghorst, were also given one-match bans under the "disrepute" umbrella.

All the suspensions start on Monday. Gascoigne was already due a one-match suspension for exceeding the disciplinary-points limit and he will miss the home game against Partick Thistle tomorrow week and the match at Motherwell on December 19.

His suspension applies only to domestic matches and he will be free to play for Rangers in their final Champions' League game against Borussia Dortmund next Wednesday and for England against Portugal at Wembley on December 12.

But the 12 points added to his record yesterday by the committee, who treated his offence as a sending-off, means that the Englishman is well on his way towards the 16-point ceiling and another ban.

In all four players' cases, television evidence was not allowed; the SFA council will vote in January on the executive committee's recommendation to allow video tapes to be viewed in certain circumstances. The only evidence at the Gascoigne-Brown hearing was provided by the referee supervisor Don McVicar because the match referee John Rowbotham took no action against any of the players during the game.

But it was television's compressed highlights of the alleged offences which almost certainly prompted the Procurator Fiscal's demand for a police report. Gascoigne appeared to be involved in butting and elbowing incidents, one of which resulted in the Aberdeen midfielder Paul Bernard needing five stitches in a gashed chin.

Yesterday's punishments looked insignificant in comparison with the 12-match ban imposed on Duncan Ferguson for butting Raith Rovers' John McStay — an offence for which he later received three months in prison. Ferguson, like the Ibrox four, had also been reported by a supervisor after the match referee Kenny Clark took no action.

Twin set . . . Paul and Mick Pullen, right, whose recall at 37 has revived Bognor's fortunes PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW HASSON

History calling on the Rocks

FA CUP PROFILE: Paul Weaver on Bognor Regis Town, who will go farther than ever before if they beat Peterborough tomorrow

HISTORY may be bunk, as Henry Ford suggested, but Guy Rutherford is proud of his. The most expensive player in Bognor Regis Town FC's history — he cost £2,000 from the Beazer Homes' Havant Town — takes a considerable lineage to Peterborough for tomorrow's FA Cup second-round tie.

"My great-grandad Jock Rutherford won 11 England caps between 1904 and 1908. He won an FA Cup winner's medal with Newcastle in 1910 and played in the final in 1905, 1906, 1908 and 1911. He also played for Arsenal and Stoke."

Rutherford, 28 and a skilful midfield player, had some of the England caps on view at the club's training ground this week but was rudely interrupted by the manager Jack Pearce. "The way you played the other night, son, I thought you were your great-grandad." Laughs all round. Spirits are high.

Pearce is reasonably confident that tomorrow will not see him sacked by the club from the Icis League — the old Isthmian League in new clothes and still a feeder for the Vauxhall Conference — as he is also Bognor Regis Town's chairman. "I'm looking for a new chairman because the two jobs make a bit of a handful and I enjoy the management bit more — especially this season, with everything going so well.

"All the posh papers have been on to me this week and none of the tabloids, so people are really taking us seriously. The funny thing is we should really be struggling this season but we are doing well in the Icis League and the Cup. Somehow the players have gelled together and are all fighting for each other. Last season, when I fancied us to really do things, we had to battle against relegation."

The old theory that people move to Eastbourne and Worthing to retire, and then on to Bognor for what comes next, is being seriously challenged; there is a buzz about the place. It featured on the BBC's Holiday programme on Tuesday and now the football club is in the second round for the fourth time.

"We have never made the third round," says Pearce, 46, who started his playing career with the club in 1970 and became player-manager in 1976. He has been in charge for 992 games. "The best side we had here was in 1984-85. We played Swansea away in the first round and played them off the park in the second half. Only Jimmy Rimmer kept them in it with a string of brilliant saves.

"We drew 1-1 and everyone said the league club would show their professionalism in the replay at our place, so it was very gratifying to outplay them once more and beat them 3-1. Then we got beat by Reading in the second round. Three of that year's Bognor side turned pro, which is unusual for a non-league club."

Rutherford, who works as a manager at the builders' merchant Travis Perkins, has already faced a league side. "When I played for Fareham we faced Torquay in the first round and were leading 2-0 with eight minutes to go. It finished 2-2 and we lost the replay 2-1."

Bognor — or The Rocks as they are called, after the hazards to shipping which lie off the local coastline — overcame Whitehawk, Dover Athletic, Banstead Athletic, Dulwich Hamlet and Tiverton Town in the qualifying rounds before defeating Ashford in the first round proper.

"One reason why we have done well is that we've managed to talk Paul and Mick Pullen out of retirement," says Pearce.

Paul and Mick are 37-year-old twins who first played for Bognor in 1976. Mick, a defender and a buyer for a building firm, had a two-year spell as manager from 1992 and has made over 900 appearances for the club.

Paul, a financial consultant, is also a defender but is more versatile, chipping in with a few goals. But not everyone can tell the two apart. "A few years ago I fouled a Dulwich player. The referee blew up for the foul — but then sent Mick off," said Paul. At least it looked like Paul.

Case hangs heavy on FA

Venables could be in court before Euro '96, **Martin Thorpe** reports

THE Football Association is bracing itself for more potentially embarrassing revelations about Terry Venables's business life as a result of the DTI's decision to start court proceedings to disqualify the England manager as a company director.

The case will be heard by a judge in a County Court and will include much of the DTI's evidence against Venables, contained in a 400-page report compiled over 18 months, being read out in open court and reported in the media, possibly before or during the European Championship.

The DTI's action is understood to relate to Venables's activities at his club Scribes West, a company he ran called Edennote, Tottenham Hotspur plc and Tottenham Hotspur Football and Athletic Company.

Venables has said he will contest the DTI case: "I am not guilty and will fight this as I have fought all the other allegations that have been made against me."

Although Ian Burton, the solicitor who advises Venables on criminal law, insisted yesterday that it is unlikely this matter will come to court until after the European Championship in June, a civil-law expert has told the Guardian that this is an optimistic forecast. The matter could be in court well before then, perhaps as early as February.

The FA is already sensitive to the potential for bad publicity, with the FA's chairman Bert Millichip having made a personal plea to the High Court to have the libel action brought against Venables by Tottenham's owner Alan Sugar put back from January until after the European Championship. The case will now be heard in October.

There is also the question of what potentially embarrassing disclosures may come out of any criminal proceedings brought against Eddie Ashby, Venables's business associate. It is understood that the DTI has recommended criminal proceedings be brought against him for allegedly managing a company while an undischarged bankrupt.

Although Ashby's role at Tottenham was always thought to be as Venables's business adviser, the Guardian has seen two letters, one headed Tottenham Hotspur plc and dated October 29 1991, and the other headed Tottenham Hotspur Football and Athletic Co Ltd dated October 3 1991, and both signed "E Ashby, general manager". Venables was chief executive at the time.

Ashby is currently on police bail after being arrested in October this year and questioned in connection with an investigation into allegations of a conspiracy to defraud and a breach of company law. This is understood to concern a company called Five Star Batteries (UK) Ltd. No charges have been brought against Ashby in this case. One of the men arrested with Ashby was Jakub Pawlikowski, who is the company secretary of Scribes West Ltd.

However, the FA remains firm in its support of Venables. A spokesman said of the DTI's proceedings: "This does not affect his position. Our view is that he is not employed as a businessman but as a football coach."

Coca-Cola Cup, quarter-final draw

Keegan must beware the allure of Coke

David Lacey

THE SCENT of success remains strong in Newcastle's nostrils, but if the Premiership title is their priority it would be just as well if they did not become hooked on Coke. Should the New Year find Kevin Keegan's team heading for Wembley in both the Coca-Cola Cup and the FA Cup, while still setting the pace at the top of the league, the strain may begin to tell.

Keegan has already distanced himself from the idea that Newcastle can sort out their options as they go along and quietly slip out of the contest they fancy least. "We're not yet good enough to pick and choose our competitions," he said, and at Anfield on Wednesday night the team was as good as his word.

In knocking out Liverpool, the Coca-Cola Cup holders, to reach the quarter-finals for the first time in 20 seasons, Newcastle looked as if they could not break the winning habit even if they tried.

At Anfield Les Ferdinand, the most likely player to break a growing stalemate, was forced out with a gashed head and concussion after a collision with Mark Wright. On came Steve Watson, the ultimate utility man, to win the tie with a precocious chip shot.

This was Newcastle's 16th victory in 19 matches, but Keegan is going to need his new strength in depth. To reach the semi-finals of the Coca-Cola Cup, Newcastle will have to beat, or at least hold, Arsenal at Highbury during the second week in January, having met them in the league at St James' Park a week earlier.

On hearing the draw Terry McDermott, Keegan's assistant, bemoaned Newcastle's luck — "a bit of a dampener" — before adding the singular observation that "no one hands you cups on a plate." Indeed they do not, saucers still being in common use, but who is to say that Newcastle will not see off Arsenal as they have done most other teams this season?

Certainly the further they go in this competition the more their main Premiership rivals, Manchester United, who decided some time ago that Coke was for teenagers, will rub their hands. By the time Newcastle visit Old Trafford on December 27, the championship may well lie between these two thoroughbreds, and United have already proved how beneficial to a team's stamina getting knocked out of the cups before the run-in can be.

Arsenal, for whom an appearance at Wembley next March would give Bruce Rioch's management an early stamp of approval, will not be thinking this way after overcoming a Sheffield Wednesday team which this season has lost more leads than Inspector Clouseau. Nor will Aston Villa, who should reach the semi-finals after a West Midlands confrontation with Wolves, or Leeds United, who despite being knocked out by Mansfield last season, ought to dispose of Reading.

The other tie depends on replays. To preserve the prospect of Juninho appearing at Wembley, Middlesbrough have to beat Birmingham at St Andrew's before winning at Norwich or Bolton.

QUARTER-FINAL DRAW: Aston Villa v Wolves; Norwich or Bolton v Middlesbrough or Birmingham; Arsenal v Newcastle; Leeds v Reading. (To be played week of January 8.)

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Third-round draws Northern: Blackpool v Chesterfield; Carlisle v Burnley; York v Notts County; Rotherham v Lincoln. **Southern:** Peterborough v Colchester; Shrewsbury v Brighton; Fulham v Bristol Rovers; Hereford v Northampton (to be played week of January 8).

BBC priced out of FA Cup final

Andrew Culf

THE BBC conceded yesterday that the escalating cost of sporting rights had priced the FA Cup final out of its reach.

Alan Yentob, controller of BBC1, admitted the loss of the final to ITV was a huge blow but the BBC would continue to fight for what it could afford.

Details of the FA's four-year deal with ITV and BSkyB, worth an estimated £130 million and starting from the 1997/98 season, were announced yesterday.

ITV will show the final exclusively, plus live matches from the third round onwards on Sunday afternoons, and highlights from replays. Sky Sports will screen live games from each round, plus live replays.

The BBC's 31-year-old Match of the Day survives, showing highlights on Saturday nights. It is understood ITV is paying £60 million over four years, Sky £55 million and the BBC £15 million.

The BBC has screened every final since 1938 and a spokeswoman said: "Obviously it will be a wrench to give up live coverage after so many years but it is becoming clear that the huge escalation in the rights fees for live domestic football has put some events beyond the reach of the BBC's licence fee."

The BBC wanted to maintain a strong football presence. "The next two European Championships and the 1998 World Cup in France will be covered live on BBC1 and our contract for the FA Cup continues to the end of next season, giving us two more live finals," she added.

Trevor Phillips, the FA's commercial director, said: "It has been our overriding concern that our matches are available to the widest possible audience. It has always been our ambition that any new deal encompasses all three major TV networks."

Marcus Plantin, ITV's network director, said the new partnership with Sky and the FA was important to maintaining major sports events on ITV.

Ball bounces to top award

MANCHESTER City's recent recovery has led to Alan Ball being named Carling Manager of the Month for November.

City, who began last month without a win all season and anchored to the bottom of the Premiership, have taken 10 points from their last four matches to escape the relegation zone.

It is Ball's fifth such award and the Carling panel, which includes Terry Venables, said the latest achievement was "richly deserved by Alan, who has been under intense pressure this season".

Sunderland have transfer-listed their leading scorer Phil Gray after the unsettled Northern Ireland international submitted a written request to leave.

Peter Reid, Sunderland's manager, said: "I do not want anyone who does not want to play for this club."

Chris Kamara, Bradford City's new manager, has appointed the former Norwich player and caretaker manager Gary Megson as his first-team coach.

United fans go to market to buy a voice

John Duncan

MANCHESTER UNITED supporters have bought shares in the club to gain access to today's annual general meeting and lobby them to use this year's record profit to cut admission prices. The Independent Manchester United Supporters Association will argue that high-priced match tickets are alienating the young and threatening the club's future.

"The club have developed a youth policy on the field which is the envy of all others," said Chris Robinson, the IMUSA chair. "But a similar strategy has to be adopted off the field if the club is to attract and retain its supporters of the future."

Manchester United took £19.6 million through the turnstiles last season and made £20 million profit. They could, the fans argue, halve prices without threatening the financial position.

However the United chairman Martin Edwards moved to defuse any row yesterday by hinting that the pleas will be heeded. "We are aware that over the last few years prices have gone up considerably," he said, "and that is mainly due to developing the ground. When we set prices for next season we will take that into consideration."

The IMUSA have become an increasingly influential alternative voice at the club in recent months, becoming involved in the Paul Ince transfer debacle among other issues. "The club have consistently refused to meet representatives from our organisation to talk on matters we have raised with them," said Andy Walsh, the secretary. "By buying shares we hope to get them to listen to the genuine fears that fans have for the future of the club."

Today's meeting takes place at Manchester's Armitage Centre and will be chaired by Sir Roland Smith, the head of Manchester United Plc.

A network of independent supporters associations is currently developing in England and adding strength to lobbying efforts on behalf of the Football Supporters Association.

Rugby League

Study finds racism 'a significant problem' in the professional game

Paul Fitzpatrick

A STUDY into racism in rugby league has found that the game "has a small but significant problem". The study, funded in part by the RFL and carried out by Leeds University's sports and leisure school, says that "racism is evident throughout the game and should not be dismissed as simply being the preserve of a minority of rogue clubs".

It also warns of an attitude of complacency that makes it "difficult to alert people to significant issues".

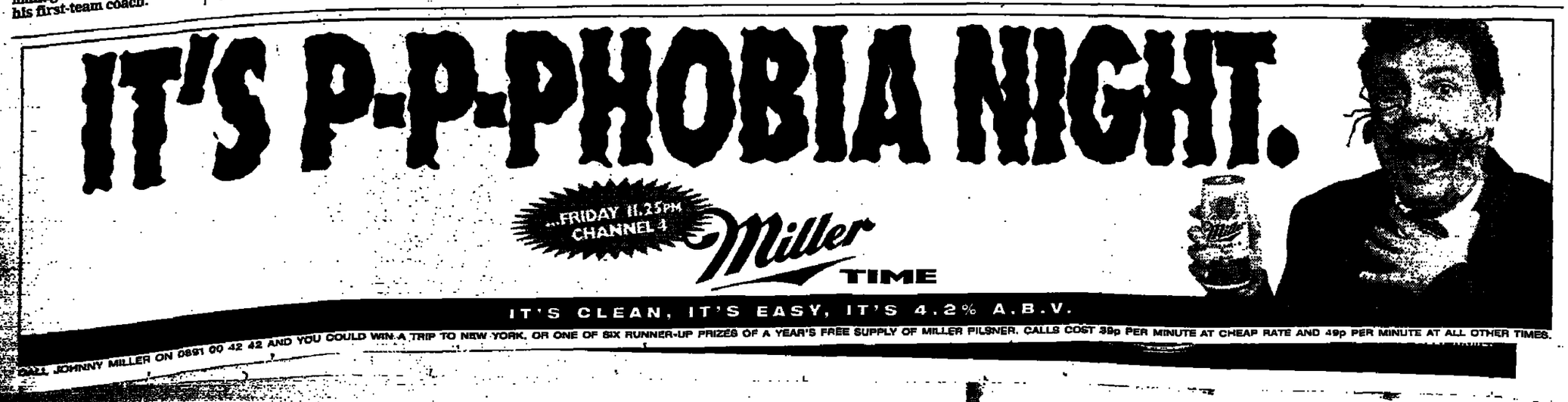
Martin Offiah and his Wigan captain Shaun Edwards both stated that general abuse from the terraces had reached disturbing levels, though Offiah, an international winger and one of the highest-profile black players ever, felt that racial abuse was not as bad now as when he first came into the game in 1987.

The report, however, tended to contradict him. It found that 46 per cent of supporters had heard abuse of black players from the terraces and that the players questioned had reported greater awareness of the problem.

The RFL is set on early preventive action. "By assessing the nature of the problem at this early stage we can put in place any necessary measures to combat racism before it assumes the proportions it has done in other sports," says the RFL's chief executive Maurice Lindsay.

● Bruce McGuire, Warrington's 33-year-old Australian forward, has retired due to a shoulder injury that has kept him out of action since the end of September. Warrington recently released another Australian, the 34-year-old scrum-half Greg Mackey.

● Barrie-Jon Mather, Wigan's international centre who claims he is a free agent, is joining Perth Western Reds, for whom he is reported to have signed a three-year contract. Wigan say he is contracted to them until 1997 but they are prepared to release him for £150,000.



Rugby Union

Magnate offers to buy Saints

Robert Armstrong

NORTHAMPTON will next week decide on a takeover bid by Keith Barwell, a millionaire who made his money out of free newspapers.

Barwell proposes to pay £1 million to become the majority shareholder of a new private limited company that will take over the club from its members. The 2,500 members will vote on the proposal at an extraordinary general meeting on December 10.

Barwell offers members the right to buy back the controlling interest and promises to provide extra funding when it is required. "I believe," he said, "this is the final brick in the wall which makes us very, very powerful."

Newcastle Gosforth may have to play off to avoid relegation this season, even though Courage League Two will be expanded from 10 to 14 clubs. The National Clubs Association has recommended that the last team in League Two should play off against the fifth team in League Three.

London will tour New Zealand next summer. Steve Bates, who captained London to a 40-32 defeat by Western Samoa this week, welcomed the opportunity for players to develop the cohesion that "only comes from playing a run of games together".

London have made sweeping changes for tomorrow's match against the South-West at Sunbury that will determine last place in the CIS Divisional Championship. Tony Diprose, one of six survivors from the Samoan defeat, becomes the team's third captain in four games.

LONDON: J Ufton (Wasps); D O'Leary (Harlequins), L Scrase, N Greenstock, S Roiser; G Gregory, A Gomarsall (all Wasps); S Brown (Harlequins), S Mitchell (Harlequins), G Holmes (Saracens), A Snow (Harlequins), M Langley (Saracens), M Watson (Harlequins), A Diprose (Saracens, capt), M White (Wasps).

NORTH (to play W Samoa, Huddersfield Dec 5): T Stimpson (West Hartlepool); J Naylor (Orrell), W Greenwood (Harlequins), P Johnson (Orrell, capt), J Mallinder (Sale); R Liley (Sale), A Healey (Orrell); M Hynes (Northampton), S Diamond (Sale), M Shelley (West Hartlepool), D Baldwin (Sale), J Fowler (Sale), M Greenwood (Wasps), N Ashurst (Sale), C Vyvyan (Sale). Replacements: D Scully (Wakefield), N Ryan (Sale), J Baxendell (Sale), G Baldwin (Wakefield), K Herbert (West Hartlepool), R Arnold (Newcastle Gosforth).

Boxing

King and Tyson shrug off New Jersey snub

Jack Massarik

WITH one bound he was free. Demonstrating all the qualities that prompted "Teflon Don" headlines when his insurance-fraud trial collapsed in deadlock a fortnight ago, Don King moved smartly yesterday to unstick Mike Tyson's next fight.

The fat hit the fire when the gaming commissioners of New Jersey, noting that King had not yet been cleared of the charges, voted unanimously on Wednesday to ban his protégé Tyson from fighting Buster Mathis Jr in Atlantic City next month.

This decision put King in the financial frying-pan, but only temporarily. Yesterday he was able to announce that Atlantic City's loss would be Philadelphia's gain. The fight would now take place in the city of brotherly love, specifically at its 17,380-seat Spectrum arena, and on the same date as originally planned, December 16.

"I'm changing to Philly because it has the presumption of innocence instead of the other way around," said King, as aware as any other American that the Constitution makes him innocent until proven guilty — and that his retrial is not scheduled to take place until next April at the earliest.

● It was confirmed yesterday that Henry Wharton will make the second defence of his European super-middleweight title against Frederic Seillier of France in Halifax on January 13. Assuming Wharton wins, his promoter-manager Mickey Duff will challenge Nigel Benn to a rematch for the WBC title. Benn won their first fight comfortably but Wharton was a little overawed that night and made a slow start. Duff believes Wharton is improving with every contest and is "a 25 to 30 per cent better fighter" now.

No bull at Earls Court . . . women stood at the qualifying oche for the first time FRANK BARON

Darts

Hedman of Essex takes womanly tilt at the world title

John Duncan with a skilful new breed of flighty females

DETA HEDMAN made darts history yesterday and she did not need to get up early to do it. At 10am she was at home in Essex but a car ride soon took her to Earls Court to bang on the nickel-tungsten door of one of sport's most male bastions.

Hedman, tall, black, a joinery assembler and sister of the former Crystal Palace footballer Rudi, walked into the cavernous ballroom of an international hotel and took her place in one of the 26 booths lining the walls, a dartboard in each.

This is where the 232 qualifying hopefuls for next month's Embassy Professional Darts Championship are to be whittled down to eight and this year, for the first time, 11 women were let in to take their shot at gracing Frimley Green's hallowed oche.

Hedman is one of them. "She frightens me when I play her," said her brother Al, also trying to qualify, "so God knows what some of these guys must feel."

The question is, why would a woman want to join a world of smoke-filled halls, beer-drenched platforms and pot-bellied artistes of the arrow?

"It's not like that at all," said Mandy Solomons, a leading player who recently joined the sport's elite with a "nine-darter" (seven treble 20s, a treble 19 and a double 12). "You're not allowed to smoke and drink on stage and a lot of the blokes aren't fat at all, in fact they're quite thin." That assertion was not fully borne out by a glance around yesterday's jovial 500 enthusiasts.

There ought not to be any real bar to women at the oche, so why has it taken them so long to be accepted? "It's probably something to do with mental attitude," said Sandra Greatbatch, three times winner of the British Women's Open. "From when they are small boys, men are geared up to be aggressive and competitive where women are taught to be housemakers and worry about this and that. Men are better trained to focus and concentrate."

But Hedman displayed nickel-tungsten focus in the first round to beat her Canadian opponent Carl Mercer in straight sets. "The men feel the pressure more than the women," said Brian Holt, a portly official from Staffordshire. "It's not easy going back to your pub and telling them you lost to a woman."

Hedman's second-round victim John Hook faced just such a prospect back in nearby Hayes last night. But the tale ended in defeat, if hardly in tears, when she lost to Garry Spedding of Cumbria in the next round. "She's tough," Spedding said. "With women players like her, you can't argue with them being let in here."

Sandown with form

12.50 Succotash
1.25 Sharp Performer
2.00 Lonesome Glory
2.30 See More Business
3.00 Mere Class
3.30 Darter

Going: Good (good to firm in places). ★ Denotes blinkers.

9 3 SANTELLA BOY (16) C Mann 11-3 ... R Dunwoody ★
10 STAR FIGHTER M Haynes 11-3 ... D Skyrme
11 ILANDRA S Dow 10-12 ... P Niven

TOP FORM TIPS: Alltime Dancer 8, Vario 7, Court Nap 6

Betting: 7-4 Vario, 5-2 Darter, 3-1 Alltime Dancer, 6-1 Court Nap, 7-1 Santella Boy, 25-1 Sandra, 33-1 Star Fighter, 50-1 Flow Back, Royal Rabbit. 11 runners.

FORM GUIDE - ALLTIME DANCER: Always prominent, led app 2 out, soon headed and weakened, 13l 4th of 13 to Paddy's Return (Ascot 2m1f, Gd).
VARIO: Made all, ridden out to win by 3l from Royale Angela, with SANTELLA BOY (rec 14lb), under pressure 3 out, weakened flat, 10l 3rd (Hereford 2m1f, Gd).
COURT NAP: Easy winner last time when headway 6th, led going well 2 out, ridden out, won by 4l from Iron N Gold (Windsor 2m, Gd).

● Frankie Dettori, in action at Southwell today and Wolverhampton tomorrow in his quest to take 1,000 rides in Britain this year, took his 1995 wins to 215 with a double on Mask Flower and Sweet Wilhelmina at Lingfield yesterday.

Racing

Dunwoody in demand

Ron Cox

RICHARD Dunwoody's links with the cream of Ireland's chasers and hurdlers are further strengthened this weekend.

After partnering Sound Man for Edward O'Grady at Sandown tomorrow, the Ulsterman moves on to Fairyhouse on Sunday to team up with the leading Champion Hurdle contender Montelado.

Successful twice on the Flat this autumn, Montelado takes on top staying hurdler Dorans Pride over two and a half miles in the Hattons Grace Hurdle, a race won 12 months ago by Danoli.

Pat Flynn, who trains Montelado, hopes Dunwoody will be free to ride the eight-year-old throughout his campaign towards Cheltenham, where the pair captured the 1992 Festival Bumper.

"Richard has ridden the horse three times before and knows him very well," said Flynn. "He rode him to win the Cheltenham Bumper, won on him first time over hurdles and then rode him at Leopardstown at Christmas when he was beaten by Bayrouge."

Flynn now believes Montelado, vying for Champion Hurdle favouritism, is clear of the injury problems that hampered his progress following his record-breaking victory in the 1993 Supreme Novice Hurdle.

Dunwoody, who guided odds-on shot Ventana Canyon to a bloodless victory in the Seskin Beginners Chase at Thurles yesterday, renews an old association at Sandown Park today when Remittance Man returns from a lengthy absence in the Crowngap Construction Handicap Chase.

Egypt Mill Prince, a brave second in the Mackeson, is the obvious favourite here, but if Lonesome Glory (2.00) takes to these fences — and he has reportedly gone well in schooling practice — he could prove the proverbial blot on the handicap.

Winner of two Colonial Cups and conqueror of the ill-fated Al Muhtahm over hurdles at Cheltenham three years ago, Lonesome Glory is lodging with the in-form Charlie Brooks at Lambourn. He is top class in the States and could make a mockery of this mark judged on his overall record.

Lord Wakeham, a director of the British Horseracing Board and former Government minister, confidently predicted a victory for racing in the forthcoming battle with the bookmakers for a share of the Chancellor's Budget betting tax cut.

In a speech at the Go Racing in Yorkshire luncheon in Ripon yesterday, Lord Wakeham declared: "Racing must — and let there be no doubt, it will — secure its fair and direct share of the funds released by the duty reduction."

Bookmakers, who want to implement the cut by lowering deductions on off-course bets to nine pence in the pound, and the greyhound industry are claiming their own slice of the £65 million cake.

Southwell (All-weather Flat)

12.40 Wildfire
1.10 Charterhouse Xpres
1.40 Rose Of Glenn
2.10 Let's Get Lost
2.40 Chairmans Choice
3.10 Bells Of Holland
3.40 Peggy Spencer

Going: Standard. ★ Denotes blinkers. Draw: Low numbers favoured.

7 004504 BEAUMONT (15) J Banks 5-8-9 ... J Quinn 2
8 //403/5- PERSIAN HAZE (685) B McMath 6-8-7 R Cochrane 6
9 350003 RISKY TU (15) (C) P Kelleway 4-8-0 G Bardwell 5
10 406066 JARROW (20) Mrs A Naughton 4-7-7 D Wright (3) 8

TOP FORM TIPS: Let's Get Lost 8, Tempering 7, Our Main Man 6

Betting: 7-2 Let's Get Lost, 9-2 Beaumont, 6-1 Stevie's Wonder, 8-1 Nymegen, Calder King, Our Main Man, 9-1 Tempering, 12-1 Risky Tu. 10 runners.

Exeter runners and riders

1.20 Run Henry Run
1.50 Rather Sharp
2.20 Lightening Lad
2.50 HARWELL LAD (nap)
3.20 Political Panto (nb)
3.50 Spring Saint

Going: Good to soft. ★ Denotes blinkers.

1.20 TRIPLEPRINT COND JOCKEYS NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE 2m 2f £2,176

101 312F-10 SHAARID (34) (C) I Balding 7-12-0 ... B Fenton
102 P6422-0 DRESS DANCE (30) N Mitchell 5-11-7 Sophie Mitchell
103 F0-3 RUN HENRY RUN (19) J Gifford 5-11-3 L Aspell (3)
104 1/4400-1 RIVER LEVER (15) D Gandolfo 8-11-3 D Leahy (3) ★
105 0000-22 KOO'S PROMISE (31) C Popham 4-10-12 ... T Dascombe
106 00-00-1 TAMANDU (13) C James 5-10-8 ... P McLoughlin

409 3FP441- COUNTERBALANCE (186) J McConnochie 8-10-7 ... S McNeill
410 31P6FP- SIMON JOSEPH (228) T George 8-10-6 D Bentley
411 061FF3- SHIMBA HILLS (242) Mrs J Retter 7-10-6 ... J Lodder
412 40/5432- BARELY BLACK (265) N Babbage 7-10-3 ... A S Smith
413 F231P-P STEEPLE JACK (15) K Bishop 8-10-1 R Greene
414 3022/6-2 TITUS ANDRONICUS (22) (C) N Gaselee 8-10-0 ... J R Kavanagh ★
415 PP016-3 DEMING VALLEY (13) (C) A Jones 10-10-0 ... L Harvey ★
15 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Harwell Lad 8, Really A Rascal 7, Terao 6

1994: Clever Shepherd 9 11 3 Peter Hobbs 9-4 (P J Hobbs) 8 ran

Betting: 3-1 Harwell Lad, 7-2 Really A Rascal, 6-1 Terao, 8-1 Conti D'Estruval, 10-1 Sunley Bay, Titus Andronicus, Super Malt, 14-1 Shimba Hills

Results

Southern Dominion (7-2 fav). 14 ran. 2½, 3. (C Thornton) Tote £4.90; £2.20, £2.60, £1.30. Dual F £18.90. CSF £51.88. Tricast £180.24.

12.45 (5f): 1, CHEEKY CHAPPY, P Fessey (6-1); 2, Speedy Classic (5-4 fav); 3, Tee-Emm (5-1). 7 ran. 1, 3. (D Chapman) Tote: £7.70; £3.40, £1.50. Dual F: £9.30. CSF: £15.29. Tricast £44.46. NR: Lochon.

1.15 (5f): 1, HALF TONE, D Biggs (5-1); 2, Kalar (9-4 fav); 3, Newington Butts (13-2). 6 ran. 1½, ¾. (R Flower) Tote £6.20; £2.20, £1.40, £2.50. Dual F £8.20. CSF: £16.39. Tricast £67.81.

1.45 (6f): 1, MASK FLOWER, L Dettori (10-11 fav); 2, Ballymoney (4-1); 3, Blue Flyer (16-1). 10 ran. ¾, nk. (M Johnston) Tote: £1.70; £1.00, £3.10, £7.30. Dual F: £3.10. CSF: £5.17. Trio: £30.60. NR: Casino Chip

2.15 (1m): 1, SWEET WILHELMINA, L Dettori (13-8 fav); 2, Nomoland (14-1); 3, Belgrave (11-4). 6 ran. 2½, 1½. (Lord Huntingdon) Tote £2.70; £1.50, £2.60. Dual F: £11.80. CSF: £19.36. NR: Deaken Dancer.

2.45 (2m): 1, GUEST ALLIANCE, A Clark (14-1); 2, Doddington Flyer (11-2); 3, Endless Fantasy (10-3). 3-1 fav Hever Golf Lady. 9 ran. Hd, 2. (A Moore) Tote £26.50; £2.60, £2.30, £1.20. Dual F: £24.00. CSF: £83.42. Trio £70.00

3.15 (6f): 1, MYJINKA, P McCabe (16-1); 2, Kira (7-1); 3, Colston-C (9-2). 4-1 fav Our Shadee. 11 ran. 1, 1½. (J O'Donoghue) Tote: £20.00; £4.60, £2.70, £1.90. Dual F: £72.10. CSF: £119.60. Tricast £547.56. Trio: £198.00. NR: Distant Dynasty, Tomal

3.45 (1m 4f): 1, TETHYS, Miss Diana Jones (4-1); 2, No Speeches (2-1 fav); 3, Retender (9-1). 10 ran. 1½, 1½. (J Eyre) Tote: £5.90; £1.10, £1.70, £3.00. Dual F: £9.30.

Haslam) Tote: £5.70; £1.90, £2.80, £7.10. Dual F: £23.30. CSF: £51.74. Trio: £163.40.

1.30 (2m 4f 110yds Hdle): 1, EDWARD SEYMOUR, Mr R Burton (16-1); 2, Clod Hopper (10-1); 3, Master Glen (16-1); 4, Target Line (8-1). 4-1 fav Soul Trader. 17 ran. ¾, 20. (W Jenks) Tote £25.00; £3.80, £3.00, £2.10, £2.90. Dual F: £304.30. CSF: £169.80. Tricast £2,394.07.

2.00 (2m 4f 110yds Ch): 1, CHICHELL'S HURST, R Marley (8-1); 2, Philip's Woody (7-2); 3, Landsker Missile (5-1). 11-4 fav Mr Flanagan. 8 ran. 4, 2½. (Mrs P Sly) Tote: £10.00; £1.30, £1.60, £3.50. Dual F: £13.60. CSF: £35.66. Tricast £144.27.

2.30 (3m Ch): 1, AIRTRAK, J R Kavanagh (6-1); 2, War Flower (40-1); 3, Pond House (6-1). Evens fav Duke of Lancaster. 6 ran. 6, dist. (N Henderson) Tote: £5.70; £2.60, £5.70. Dual F: £52.60. CSF: £86.48.

3.00 (2m Hdle): 1, DIVERTIMIENTO, E Husband (16-1); 2, Kingdom of Shades (16-1); 3, Djais (16-1). 13-8 fav Mr Bureaucrat. 19 ran. ¾, 2. (J Mackie) Tote: £29.20; £4.80, £5.30, £14.40. Dual F: £140.10. CSF: £255.06. Trio: £780.50. NR: Bright November.

3.30 (2m Hdle): 1, MOST EQUAL, O Burrows (6-1); 2, Salisong (9-2); 3, Viceroy Ruler (12-1). 3-1 fav Sassiver. 10 ran. 4, 2. (M Pipe) Tote: £9.20; £3.60, £2.20, £3.20. Dual F: £20.50. CSF: £32.44. Tricast £292.44.

JACKPOT: Not won; of £5,115.86 carried forward to Exeter today.

QUADPOT: Not won. PLACEPOT: £10,607.00 (part won)

£2.40. Dual F: £71.50. CSF: £145.95. Trio: £53.20. NR: Grand Applause.

2.10 (2m Ch): 1, DEAR DO, M A Fitzgerald (100-30); 2, Pegmarine (33-1); 3, Tudor Fable (7-1). 2-1 fav Frankus. 7 ran. 3½, 1½. (N Henderson) Tote: £5.10; £2.20, £8.60. Dual F: £298.00. CSF: £85.53. Tricast £663.00. NR: Ilewin.

2.40 (2m Hdle): 1, MASTER BEVELED, A P McCoy (1-3 fav); 2, King's Gold (16-1); 3, Wottashambles (16-1). 12 ran. 4, 4. (P Evans) Tote: £1.30; £1.20, £2.30, £3.20. Dual F: £7.10. CSF: £8.27. Trio: £71.90.

3.10 (2m 5f Ch): 1, ROYAL SQUARE, Mrs A Perrett (13-2); 2, Ask The Governor (2-1); 3, Man Mood (7-4 fav). 6 ran. Hd, 20. (G Harwood) Tote: £7.10; £2.80, £1.60. Dual F: £13.60. CSF: £18.78.

3.40 (2m Hdle): 1, ZAJIRA, A P McCoy (7-2); 2, Sophie May (100-30); 3, Joslfina (9-1). 5-2 fav Jenzsoph. 7 ran. 5, 9. (P Eccles) Tote: £4.30; £2.90, £2.80. Dual F: £8.50. CSF: £14.99.

QUADPOT: £34.10 (part won). PLACEPOT: £299.40.

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Athletics

The marathon man running for his life in the shadow of Aids

Jill Turner finds Ric Munoz taking HIV in his rapid stride and setting new targets

RIC MUNOZ is a marathon runner. At the moment he is working to bring his personal best down under 2hr 40min, a time that already puts him among the top five per cent in the world. He is also HIV positive.

"But don't write me off," he warns. "Don't automatically assume that the end is near. When it was discovered that Magic Johnson was HIV positive, the newspaper reports were like eulogies but hopefully he has helped to dispel that kind of fatalism. Don't write somebody off just because they are HIV positive. Think again."

The 37-year-old legal secretary from Los Angeles has made no changes in his life, let alone his training programme, since discovering his condition in 1987. He runs up to 80 miles a week and participates in 10 marathons a year, including the New York and London, and his personal best has actually improved in that time.

His diet remains that of an athlete, with the addition that he became a vegetarian five years ago. "But not," he insists, "because of my condition. I did it to lose weight so I could run faster." He now weighs 150lb on a 5ft 10in frame.

He has rejected offers of Aids-inhibiting drugs, although he tried them for six months at his doctor's request before abandoning them. Neither does he look to support groups or alternative therapy and he confounds some medical opinion with his uncompromising training schedule.

"When my doctor saw how important running was to my psychological well-being, he said I could continue, although I won't ignore any warning signals my body gives me. But so far in eight years I have had no manifestations of Aids. I feel the same today as I did a decade ago and I don't believe in sitting around looking at four walls just because you are faced with a challenge in life, even if it is one that is probably the most serious of all illnesses.

"I don't want to make it sound like it's not a big deal, because it is. But there is no point in panicking and giving in. None of us is guaranteed to live to 50, 60, 70, 80 anyway, as I am continually reminded every time I get into my car at home in Los Angeles. I never assume I'm going to get where I'm going and that's nothing to do with being HIV positive.

"People don't believe I didn't freak out when I discovered the news. One journalist who I spoke to would not accept it and his editor asked him to come back to me along the lines that this was Aids and this is a killer and how could I be so calm about it. But just because the classic melodramatic movie reaction is to clutch one's heart and scream 'Oh God', that's not to say that I should react in that way. That's just not me."

Munoz's strength of character, love of sport and determination have been picked up by Nike, whc paid him $800 (£515) plus royalties to feature in their latest "Just Do It" commercial, which will be screened in the UK this weekend to coincide with World Aids Day today after a positive response from American viewers.

Nike's UK public relations manager Tamara McCartney said: "It is a message not only to those who are HIV positive but to everyone that fitness can play a major part in your life. If he can do it, with what he has to face, then . . ."

His fee, naturally, is going to cover the cost of his entry into next year's London marathon and he hopes the advertisement will help to educate and inspire others, HIV positive or not.

So far Munoz, a homosexual, has been lucky enough to avoid the prejudice that often surrounds those with his condition, even in the close-knit world of athletics.

"I have not come up against it yet, living in a big city like LA. But obviously, if you are in a race with thousands of people, you are going to come up against a cross-section of society and all the prejudices they might have. With the commercial, they will know who I am and the opportunity is there for them to voice any opinion. I am prepared for it but luckily anyone who has said anything to me has been praising."

He is looking forward to the future, has already signed up for six marathons next year and is taking part in two — in California and Alabama — within the next eight days.

"I know I am capable of getting my time down," he says, as he sets off for one of his 10-km "baby runs". "That's what I'm aiming for at the moment.

"I want to continue running and keep setting goals," he says, much like any other runner, really. "And," he adds, "I want to keep healthy and happy too" — much like the rest of the world, really.

Just doing it . . . Munoz, defying medical opinion, on a training run in London E HAMILTON-WEST

Australian woman flies highest

EMMA GEORGE of Australia set a world mark of 4.25 metres for the women's pole vault during an athletics meeting in Melbourne yesterday.

George bettered the mark of 4.23m set by Sun Caiyun of China last month.

A long jumper who turned to pole vaulting a year ago, George had been planning an attempt on the record for some months.

The women's pole vault is not yet an Olympic sport, but is expected be accepted for Sydney in 2000.

Extra time

Edited by Jeremy Alexander

Swimmers go for distant gold

SWIMMERS reckon they get a raw deal. They tend to hit public consciousness only in the Olympics, vying with all those team games, trap shooting and kayak fours which are far less a test of pure athletic prowess. Arguably freestyle is less contrived than hurdles on the track and butterfly compares to race walking.

For 20 years British excellence has concentrated in men's breaststroke — Wilkie, Goodhew, Moorhouse, Gillingham — with the odd star woman. Now we have three backstrokers in the world's top eight — the Amateur Swimming Association has no explanation — plus Karen Pickering.

Today Pickering defends her 200m freestyle title in the second world short-course championships in Rio. On Sunday Neil Willey goes in his favoured 100m back. Only five Britons were sent. The other two backers, Harris and Ruckwood, preferred not to interrupt winter training. The Olympic trials are in March but the honing process is under way.

Pickering has been three times, at £1,000 a visit, to the flume at Hamburg, the fast-flow tank where swimmers can swim flat out on the spot — Pickering's coach Dave Champion calls it an aqua-treadmill — and have their stroke profiled for efficiency by film from all angles. Pickering was pulling one arm too wide, causing elbow soreness. Mark Foster, the freestyle sprinter, identified overstretching in one arm there. Both saw benefits in technique and confidence translated to the clock. A Swede, Prof Ostrand, invented the flume in 1956. Britain is still without.

They cost a minimum of £900,000 and there is room for one at Loughborough, where plans are in place through university and ASA collaboration for a swimming centre of excellence, costing £10 million. A Lottery bid was made on Tuesday. By rights and the Olympics of 2000 the swimmers should have no complaint.

Sixth column

THE Rugby Football Union has thought of everything at its brave new Twickenham. Among the developments is Project X. This turns out to be a wine cellar, to be completed next month. Wood of the finest order has been used — French oak not Dudley — as well as Portland slate.

Its location in the main kitchens of the West Stand is not ideal but its insulation and temperature control are in safe hands. The designer and builder is Paul Morgan, brother of the City wine merchant Michael who used to play for Richmond with Tony Hallett, Wood's successor as RFU secretary. The cost is £80,000, the capacity 800 cases.

There are special bins for wines of the International Board countries and visiting VIPs are encouraged to fill them with home produce. Western Samoa are the next visitors, on December 16.

TOM OKKER, still tennis's most famous Dutchman, appears next week in the BBC's On The Line programme Maturing Assets, which looks at the attractions of seniors tours in various sports. Left on the cutting-room floor is his tale of early tournaments, when doubles partners were drawn after the singles and he got Mark Cox. After the first sniggering set someone had a word with the umpire and the pair became Okker-Cox instead of Cox-Okker. The decent bits may be heard next Thursday.

WIGAN, all-conquerors of rugby league, are in line to play at union headquarters. Derek Mann, secretary of the Middlesex Sevens, says they would be first choice as guests if the RFU, which holds a special general meeting on January 14, removes the bar to communion between the codes. Wigan like the idea — Wembley on April 27, Twickenham a fortnight later — and it could bring Martin Offiah back to his take-off point. It was in the Sevens in 1987 that Widnes spotted his potential playing for Rosslyn Park.

BENETTON's answer to the annual Paul Jones of grand prix drivers was to sign an "obedient mannequin". Thanks to Concentra's computer-generated equipment, which is fed drivers' physical details and preferences, the new cars are bespoke.

"A virtual Alesi or virtual Berger can adjust his position until comfortable, be interrogated as to his instrument reach and view of road and even let the designers build in his race-winning peculiarities such as allowing him to lean his head sideways to line up the bend as he corners at a virtual 160mph — all before the vehicle is built."

The real Alesi's race-winning amounts to one. But what would Williams have given for an obedient mannequin before encountering the if and butt of Mansell?

NO sooner was Rosa Mota, Portugal's Olympic marathon champion in 1988, elected to the Assembleia da Republica, representing the socialist party, than she announced that, having run for parliament, she was running for Atlanta, too. Mota, 38, has arranged a deputy until July.

There is a British precedent. In 1932 David, Lord Burghley, absented himself from the House of Commons, where he was elected MP for Peterborough in 1931, to defend his Olympic 400 metres hurdles title in Los Angeles. His constituents were not put out. He kept his seat to 1943.

THE Scottish FA may feel smug about its authority after Gazza appeared before it yesterday. The previous night David Sole, Edinburgh Academicals coach, was to meet the SRU to explain "tantamount to cheating" remarks. Other representatives attended but Sole apologised for his absence. He was baby-sitting.

Yesterday the club said: "Mr Sole has an extremely busy business and family life, in many ways catching up for the 10 years which he gave over almost exclusively to rugby football." It suggested "there may be difficulty dovetailing arrangements for a meeting in the run-up to Christmas". It omitted to wish the SRU a happy one from Scotland's grand slam captain.

THE Welsh RU is not doing much better. For the third time in 10 years it redrew the Swalec Cup yesterday, 10 days after its first go. It tries to do two rounds at once, putting the seeded balls (last season's last 16) in one bag and the other 48 in another, then drawing groups of four. In each of these there are effectively two matches in the fourth round, one in the fifth. It can work a treat if the right balls are in the right bags.

Tenby spotted they were wrongly seeded and worked out that Aberavon were wrongly unseeded. Tenby, eyeing a juicy tie with Neath, offered a swap. Aberavon, noting a nasty one at Tonmawr, declined and threatened the WRU with legal action. So the union recast its balls yesterday (*see results panel*).

BRITAIN's dedication to finding sports in which we can rule the world was rewarded last month. We are world champions in synchronised kite-flying triples.

Sport in brief

Golf

Sam Torrance and Corey Pavin set the pace at the Sun City Million Dollar Challenge with three-under-par 69s. "If the wind remains, the tournament will be won by a pretty high score," said Tom Lehman, who had a 71. "There are a lot of disaster holes out there waiting for you."

Squash

The Scot Peter Nicol earned a semi-final against Jansher Khan by beating England's Mark Chaloner in four games in the Qatar International.

Sailing

Samantha Brewster has had to call off her attempt to beat the west-east solo circumnavigation record because of gear damage caused by the halyard winch tearing off the mast of her yacht Heath Insured, *writes Bob Fisher.*

Rugby Union

Five Steaua Bucharest players — the internationals Nicolae Dragos, Leodor Costea, Lucian Colceriu, Marius Nedelcu and Costica Florea — have been suspended for two years for attacking a linesman on the train back from a 6-3 defeat at Baia Mare.

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Cricket

Australia v Pakistan: third Test, first day

Ijaz immovable

David Hopps in Sydney

WHEN Salim Malik walked down the pitch shortly after tea to help his batting partner Ijaz Ahmed blink away a speck of dust, it was probably the first time he had looked anyone in the eye since arriving in Australia.

But if Salim helped to remove the grit from the eye, Australia's bowlers failed to remove the grit from the innings. Ijaz secured an outstanding century from the fourth ball of the last over, cutting McDermott high over point, and allowed Pakistan to reach stumps on the first day of the final Test in relative affluence at 231 for four.

Salim and Ijaz are brothers-in-law, which should have made for an interesting sisterly conversation back home. Mrs Ijaz: Ahmed made a hundred. I hear that Malik was booed again."

Sydney's notorious Hill might be emasculated by bucket seats these days but it can still summon up a coarseness when the mood takes it.

Salim, named in Australian bribery allegations, walked out to a round of boos and cat-calls but he grimly supported Ijaz in a fourth-wicket stand of 69. Three cover drives in one over against McGrath and the second new ball promised release, but he fell leg-before in the pace bowler's next over.

After getting off the mark Salim had raised his hat to the crowd in defiance; the next time he did it, it was to respectful applause.

Ijaz's three centuries in 36 Tests have all come against Australia. How his stumps were not hit before lunch remains a mystery but he stuck it out, cut the loosest offerings from the seamers with gratitude and swung both Warne and Mark Waugh for sixes.

He batted out all but three balls of the day but, even after six hours, a hundred by the close was far from certain but edges through the slips against both Reiffel and McGrath moved him conveniently from 89 to 97, and the below-par McDermott did the rest.

A nation's prayers on behalf of Shane Warne's big toe had been answered and, with two for 44 in 27 overs, he was comfortably Australia's best bowler. Ramiz, late on the shot, hacked a short flipper to mid-on and Inzamam cut lazily to Healy.

But Warne became increasingly aggrieved as umpire Randell, correctly on each occasion, refused appeals for catches behind the wicket against both Salim and Ijaz. "Did you see how he behaved! After all he's said about our Malik!" as Mrs Salim might have said.

PAKISTAN

First innings

Aamir Sohail c M E Waugh b McDermott	4
Ramiz Raja c Slater b Warne	33
Ijaz Ahmed not out	101
Inzamam-ul-Haq c Healy b Warne	39
Salim Malik lbw b McGrath	36
Basit Ali not out	8
Extras (lb3, w2, nb5)	10
Total (for 4, 91 overs)	231

Fall of wickets: 4, 64, 141, 210.

To bat: Wasim Akram, †Rashid Latif, Saqlain Mushtaq, Mushtaq Ahmed, Waqar Younis.

Bowling: McDermott 13-4-34-1; McGrath 19-1-72-1; Reiffel 18-4-49-0; Warne 27-16-44-2; M Waugh 10-4-23-0; Blewett 4-2-6-0.

AUSTRALIA: *M Taylor, M Slater, D Boon, M Waugh, S Waugh, G Blewett, †I Healy, P Reiffel, S Warne, C McDermott, G McGrath.

Umpires: H D Bird and S G Randell.

Snooker

Hendry loses touch but stays on course

Clive Everton in Preston

STEPHEN HENDRY predictably completed a 9-3 win over Ken Doherty from an overnight 6-2 yesterday to reach the semi-finals of the Royal Liver UK Championship here at the Guild Hall, one of five titles he is defending this season.

But it was not the quality performance of last year's final, when he made a record seven centuries in beating the Dubliner 10-5. "I set myself such targets people expect me to make centuries all the time," said Hendry. "Admittedly it was a scrappy match but at least I've beaten one of the game's leading players convincingly and you've got to be satisfied with that."

The five-times world champion was expecting tomorrow's semi-final opponent to be his fellow Scot John Higgins, who resumed at 4-4 last night against the 20-year-old Welshman Mark Williams, a player who again displayed his potential by taking a 3-0 lead.

In the other semi-final Peter Ebdon will today face Ronnie O'Sullivan, the Benson & Hedges Masters champion, or Andy Hicks, whose 67 clearance to beat James Wattana 9-8 on the final black was one of the week's highlights.

After failing to win a match in the season's previous two world-ranking events O'Sullivan is returning to his best form. His 79 in the opening frame and 65 in the last, which gave him a 5-3 interval lead, were both of apparently effortless quality but he still has a couple of gears to find.

Results

Soccer

SOUTH AMERICAN SUPERCUP: Final, first leg: Independiente 2, Flamengo 0.
UEFA U-16 CHAMPIONSHIP: Group 13: Wales 0, Spain 3.
TRANSFER: FA Carling Premiership: Temporary: Andrew Turner, Tottenham to Huddersfield.

Rugby Union

SWALEC CUP: Revised fourth-round draw (winners of the matches preceded by * will be at home to the winners of the other match in the group in the fifth round): **Group 1:** *Aberavon (seed) v Caerphilly; Rhymney v Nelson. **Group 2:** *Builth Wells (seed) v Fleur de Lys; Rumney v Pontypool. **Group 3:** Cardiff (seed) v Oakdale; *Penarth v Ebbw Vale. **Group 4:** *Cardigan v Neath (seed); Heol-y-Cyw v Cowbridge. **Group 5:** *Ynysddu v Old Penarthians (seed); Maesteg v Bonymaen. **Group 6:** *Swansea (seed) v Tenby Utd; Newport Saracens v Tonmawr. **Group 7:** *South Wales Police v Old Illtydians (seed); Blaina v Abercynon. **Group 8:** *Llanharan v Pontypridd (seed); Treorchy v Kidwelly. **Group 9:** Abercrave v Blackwood (seed); *Cefn Cribbwr v Whitland. **Group 10:** Cardiff Institute (seed) v Maesteg Celtic; *Llanegennech v Abergavenny. **Group 11:** Mountain Ash (seed) v Ystradgynlais; *Newport v Tumble. **Group 12:** *Penygraig (seed) v Glynneath; Ystrad Rhondda v Llandovery. **Group 13:** Resolven v Llanelli (seed); *Newcastle Emlyn v Merthyr. **Group 14:** *Talywain v Dunvant (seed); Vardre v Glamorgan Wndrs. **Group 15:** *Garndiffaith v Newbridge (seed); Glitach Goch v Cross Keys. **Group 16:** Carmarthen Quins v Bridgend (seed); *Abertillery v Hendy. To be played on Saturday, December 16.

Golf

GREG NORMAN CLASSIC (Sydney): **First round** (Aus unless stated): **64** F Nobilo (NZ). **65** C Parry. **66** G Waite (NZ); M Campbell (NZ). **67** D Fardon; S Appleby; S Bottomley (GB). **68** C Gray; B Faxon (US); P Senior; T Price. **69** G Evans (GB); I Stanley; M Cain. **70** J Clifford; D Dunakey (US); G Dodd; M Goggin; S Robinson; J-L Guepy (Fr); R Pampling; W Riley. **71** J Senior; N Smith; L Peterson; P Lonard; P O'Malley; A Bonhomme; J Wagner; J Senden; P Devenport (NZ); S Leaney; A Stolz; J Morse (US); M Allen; S Bouvier. **72** D Podlich; J Evans; R Stephens; S Collins; G Norman; L Stephen; P Fitzgibbon; S Owen (NZ); A Cejka (Ger); D McKenzie; T Gale; E Droop; L Tinkler; B Ogle; D Hill; D Small (NZ); M Clayton. **73** B Shearer; B King; O Moore; A Painter; C Jones; G Stratfold; M Stevens; P Moss (US); B Jackson (GB); G Cole; J van de Velde (Fr); S Laycock; D Ecob; G Joyner; G Kenny; I Baker-Finch; M Harwood; M Colandro (US); R Backwell; S Scahill (NZ). **74** P Powell (NZ); D Bransdon; J Daly (US); C Van Der Velde (Neth); J Taylor; P Fowler; P Teravainen (US); S Tait; C Warren; T Carolan; A Byrnes; B Forrester; C Hanson; D Armstrong; G Moseley; M Hallberg (Swe); M Weir (Can); R Green; R Farley; W Grady. **Also: 78** S Richardson (GB).

MILLION DOLLAR CHALLENGE (Sun City): **First round: 69** C Pavin (US); S Torrance (GB). **71** T Lehman (US); N Price (Zim). **72** B Langer (Ger); E Els (SA); N Faldo (GB). **73** P Mickelson (US). **74** D Frost (SA). **75** V Singh (Fiji). **76** C Rocca (It). **79** C Montgomerie (GB).

AMERICAN EXPRESS TOUR QUALIFYING SCHOOL (La Manga): **Third round** (GB/Ire unless stated): **213** T Craik 71, 72, 70. **217** T Loveys 72, 73, 72. **218** A-M Knight (Aus) 75, 69, 74. **219** D Doniger (US) 72, 77, 70. **220** S Melin (Swe) 75, 74, 71. **221** I Tinning (Den) 71, 76, 74; E-J Smith 75, 72, 74.

Tennis

ATP CHALLENGER TOURNAMENT (Slovenia): **Second round:** M Petchey (GB) bt K Tiilikainen (Fin) 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S CHALLENGER (Mount Gambier): **Selected: First round:** L Ahl (GB) bt S Drake-Brockman (Aus) 5-7, 6-3, 6-0; L Jeffs (GB) bt R Vidats (Hun) 6-3, 6-3; S Georges (Fr) bt M Wainwright (GB) 6-2, 6-7, 6-4. **Second round:** Ahl bt S Peters (Aus) 6-1, 6-0.

Basketball

NBA: Boston 100, Detroit 96; Atlanta 106, Philadelphia 91; Charlotte 115, New York 106; San Antonio 105, LA Clippers 88; Golden State 98, Portland 112; LA Lakers 107, Phoenix 96.
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP: Group A: CSKA Moscow 82, Iraklis Salonika 65.

Bowls

CIS INSURANCE SCOTTISH INDOOR SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP (Coatbridge): **Semi-finals:** P Coston (Midlothian) bt A Blair (East Lothian) 5-7, 7-4, 7-3; D Peacock (Midlothian) bt D Miller (Cumbernauld) 1-7, 8-6, 7-5.

Cricket

SHEFFIELD SHIELD: Brisbane: Western Australia 110 (Bichel 5-31). Queensland 164-3 (T Barsby 101no). **Adelaide:** Victoria 297 (G Vimpani 78). S Australia 25-0.

Ice Hockey

NHL: Florida 1, Philadelphia 2 (ot); New Jersey 4, Colorado 3 (ot); NY Rangers 5, Buffalo 3; Tampa Bay 2, Hartford 2 (ot); St Louis 5, Montreal 4; Anaheim 2, Washington 2 (ot); San Jose 3, Calgary 5; Vancouver 2, Chicago 2 (ot).

Snooker

UK CHAMPIONSHIP (Preston): **Quarter-final:** S Hendry (Scot) bt K Doherty (Ire) 9-3.

Squash

QATAR INTERNATIONAL: Quarter-finals: J Khan (Pak) bt D Jenson (Aus) 17-15, 17-15, 15-6; B Martin (Aus) bt D Harris (Eng) 15-14, 15-11, 15-12; R Eyles (Aus) bt P Gregory (Gre) 12-15, 15-13, 17-15, 4-15, 15-4; P Nicol (Scot) bt M Chaloner (Eng) 15-10, 7-15, 17-16, 15-12.

Swimming

WORLD SHORT-COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS (Rio de Janeiro): **Finals: Men: 100m butterfly:** 1, S Miller (Aus) 52.38sec; 2, D Pimankov (Rus) 52.84; 3, M Klim (Aus) 52.80.
Women: 200m butterfly: 1, S O'Neill (Aus) 2min 06.18sec; 2, Liu Limim (China) 2.06.51; 3, M Jacobsen (Den) 2.11.07.

Fixtures

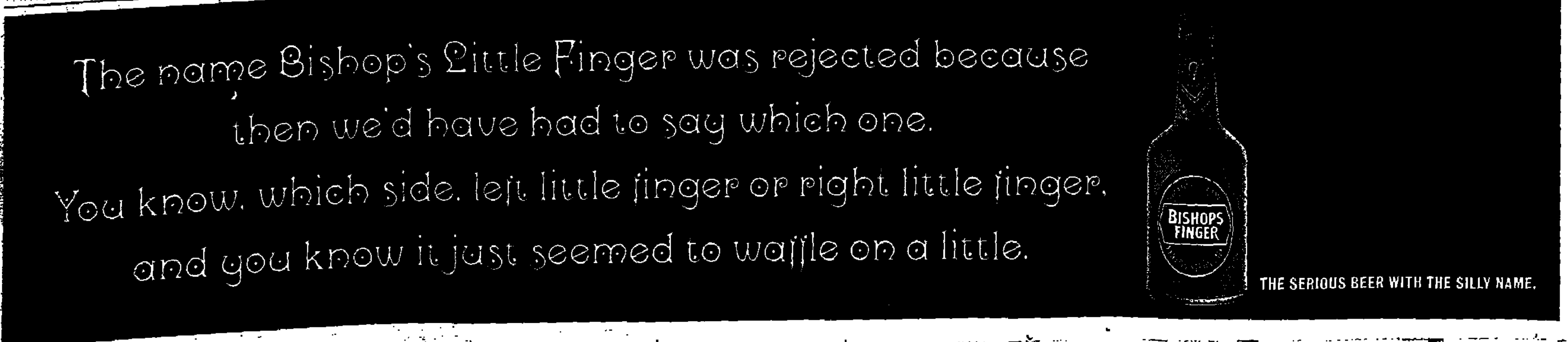
(7.30 unless stated)

Soccer

LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Premier Division: Bohemians v Shelbourne (7.45); Drogheda Utd v Derry C (7.45); St Patricks Ath v Sligo Rvrs (7.45).

Rugby League

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP: First round: Woolston v John Moores Univ.
STONES CENTENARY CHAMPIONSHIP: Bradford v Oldham.
ALLIANCE: Salford v Hull (6.0). **First Division:** Hull KR v Sheffield.



Newcastle dealt the Arsenal card, page 13

Female assault on the oche, page 14

HIV and the long-distance runner, page 15

Pakistan's batsmen show some grit, page 15

SportsGuardian

LATE ENGLAND BREAKTHROUGH SAVES ILLINGWORTH'S FACE

South Africa v England: second Test, first day

Cork spares the blushes

Mike Selvey in Johannesburg

THE presence or otherwise of Raymond Illingworth in the back of the press box is a reliable barometer of English progress in a Test. If they are doing well, he is there in a twinkling; on a bad day he becomes the invisible Man.

With South Africa put in to bat and apparently cruising at 260 for four, the chairman was in Claude Rains mode. Until the final 10 overs he and England, with a no-spin selection policy that flew in the face of local wisdom, had suffered the sort of day that invited an attempt on the world cat-kicking record.

It was then, with an adrenalin-fuelled burst with the second new ball, that Dominic Cork and Devon Malcolm played Illingworth's get-out-of-jail-free card for him.

Appropriately on a day of contrasts, one of the bowlers is the current blue-eyed boy of English cricket, the other the butt of Illingworth's scorn for most of the tour.

As the evening drew in, Malcolm, who so passionately wanted to play in this country, suddenly got it right and tore in downwind to remove Gary Kirsten for 110, the opener's maiden Test century. Three balls later he found the top of Dave Richardson's bat-handle to give Jack Russell his fifth catch of the innings.

The transformation was complete when Cork, who in five spells once again bowled with verve, swerve and brilliance, had Brian McMillan indisputably leg-before for 35 to what proved to be the day's last ball. It was his fourth wicket in 28 overs. How the man loves bowling.

So South Africa resume this morning on 278 for seven and England could well polish them off first thing. A word of caution, though: the groundsman promised a pitch that would start medium-quick and speed up. It appears that process has begun. England stuck to their task heroically but may not find it easy to claim their reward when they bat against Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock today. There is a long way to go.

It is always dangerous to criticise a decision made after winning the toss as the counter-case is hypothetical. But what is unnerving here is that, by his unilateral selection policy, the chairman is setting the playing agenda. Unless Atherton was flannelling yesterday, it was clear he would have liked to play three seamers and Richard Illingworth, with the implication that, like the South Africans, he would have batted first.

But Illingworth, convinced the pitch had hidden clammy menaces, opted for three seamers plus Malcolm. That compelled Atherton to go against an instinct that had seen him opt to bowl first only once — at Melbourne last winter, when England were slaughtered — in 26 successive matches in charge.

After South Africa had weathered a torrid half-dozen runless overs at the start it was Cork who kept England in the game before lunch. He removed Andrew Hudson without scoring — the bowler was shouting for leg-before, the umpire gave a bat-pad catch to gully — and the captain Hansie Cronje.

At lunch 75 for two was a more satisfactory position for the side invited to bat and the afternoon belonged unquestionably to Kirsten and Daryll Cullinan, whose third-wicket partnership of 137 lasted until 40 minutes after tea.

Last time they batted against England, in the second innings at The Oval, Kirsten was a hapless early victim of Malcolm's — one of nine — while Cullinan made 94 and was the only one not to fall to The Destroyer.

In a stay of almost six hours, however, this was a more assured Kirsten, with some vigourous cutting and punchy driving in his 16 boundaries.

Cullinan, Cork's colleague at Derbyshire, also seemed destined for a century, particularly when Russell missed a straightforward catch off Gough when he was on 55. But with his sense of adventure comes vulnerability.

Facing Graeme Hick's off-breaks, Cullinan tried to run a ball to third man while looking for the ball to turn. Silly boy. This time Russell made no mistake.

Scoreboard

SOUTH AFRICA
First Innings

A C Hudson c Stewart b Cork	0
G Kirsten c Russell b Malcolm	110
*W J Cronje c Russell b Cork	35
D J Cullinan c Russell b Hick	69
J N Rhodes c Russell b Cork	5
B M McMillan lbw b Cork	35
†D J Richardson c Russell b Malcolm	0
S M Pollock not out	3
Extras (b1, lb13, w2, nb5)	21
Total (for 7, 89.5 overs)	278

Fall of wickets: 3, 74, 211, 221, 250, 260, 278.
To bat: C Eksteen, M W Pringle, A A Donald.
Bowling: Cork 27.5–6–74–4, Malcolm 16–5–42–2; Fraser 16–5–46–0; Gough 15–2–64–0; Hick 15–1–38–1
ENGLAND: *M A Atherton, A J Stewart, M R Ramprakash, G P Thorpe, G A Hick, R A Smith, †R C Russell, D G Cork, D Gough, A R C Fraser, D E Malcolm.
Umpires: K B Leibenberg and D Hair.

Devonian era . . . Malcolm celebrates his second wicket in four balls CLIVE MASON

Tall tales of living on the fat of the land

Ian Katz

EVERY basketball professional in the NBA looks forward to an away game in Atlanta. Not that the undersung Hawks are a pushover, or even that the self-appointed capital of the New South holds any special delights. It is just that Friedman's is in Atlanta.

This vast shoe-shop on Mitchell Street is a giants' paradise. Bruce Teilhaber, the owner, boasts that he is the only retailer in America to stock size 20s (knock off one for the English equivalent). They come in handy whenever Denver's centre Dikembe Mutombo comes to town but Shaquile O'Neal's 22s have to be made up specially.

Teilhaber's success is a testament to the preposterous proportions of the modern American sportsman — and not just basketballers, though they enjoy a near monopoly of the silliest sizes. Nine out of 10 gridiron footballers and baseball players make an annual pilgrimage to Friedman's too.

IT IS considered the mark of a neophyte to comment on the vertigo-inducing height of the average NBA pro but a visit to Madison Square Garden will leave you gaping with the slack-jawed amazement of a village idiot at a Victorian freak-show.

The mercurial John Starks, a mere 6ft 5in, looks positively Lilliputian during warm-ups as he weaves past his fellow New York Knickerbockers Charles Oakley (6ft 9in), Charles Smith (6ft 10in) and Patrick Ewing (7ft 0in).

The other day the papers reported that the Knicks' coach Don Nelson had "gone small" to beat the mobile Vancouver Grizzlies. The average height of his controversial four-guard line-up that night was a shade under 6ft 5in.

The really scary thing is that basketballers are getting even bigger. Three decades ago there were three seven-footers in the NBA. Today Ewing is one of a not-so-elite group of 46 so-called "big men". (A merely tallish forward like the Chicago Bulls' 6ft 10in Toni Kukoc is, needless to say, not a "big man".)

One of the most remarkable sights of the youthful season came recently when the Knicks travelled to Washington. Ewing seemed to have undergone some kind of miraculous shrinking process. He had not, of course, but he was playing opposite Georghe Muresan, the Bullets' Romanian-built scoring machine. At 7ft 7in, Muresan is the tallest man ever to play the game.

It takes approximately 30 minutes for an instruction to pass from his brain to one of his gargantuan hands but that is OK because they are rarely more than an inch or two from the basket.

Pressing barely co-ordinated behemoths like Muresan into NBA service may seem the *reductio ad absurdum* of a game which values altitude above agility, yet basketball is by no means the only American sport apparently designed for freaks.

EXCEPT for darts, gridiron football must be the only sport played at its highest level by men unable to see their toes without a mirror. Years ago it was necessary to maintain the pretence that the hulking giants of the offensive and defensive lines were also athletes, capable of sprinting 100 metres before Linford could pack his lunchbox.

These days the big men of football are fat and proud of it. Nate Newton, the 330lb colossus of the Dallas Cowboys' offensive line, posed for Sports Illustrated tucking into a heap of potato snacks. Blocking Philadelphia's William "The Refrigerator" Perry (335lb) could be dangerous, he conceded. "If we rub up against each other the wrong way, we'll start a grease fire."

The dimensions of Newton and Perry scarcely rate as talking points now. Five 300lb offensive linemen were snapped up in the first round of this year's draft alone.

Even baseball, the American sport most friendly to the normally proportioned, boasts its share of improbable shoe sizes and patent paunches. Randy Johnson, the American League's most feared pitcher, stands 6ft 10in — off the mound. He is known, a trifle impersonally, as "The Big Unit".

The American League's practice of allowing "designated hitters" to bat in place of pitchers ensures late-career employment for veterans whose inflated vital statistics have long disqualified them from fielding duty.

All of which is splendid news for Teilhaber. "The college teams today are bigger than the pro teams 10 years ago," he said with some relish. "I love sports."

Gascoigne banned and still faces threat of legal action

THE THREAT of legal action still hangs over Paul Gascoigne after the Rangers and England midfielder escaped with a one-match ban at the Scottish FA's disciplinary hearing yesterday.

Gascoigne, who appeared to be involved in butting and elbowing incidents, and his Rangers team-mate John Brown, similarly punished by the SFA, could face prosecution by the Procurator Fiscal.

That possibility hardened yesterday as it emerged that the two other members of the so-called Ibrox Four, Rangers' Alan McLaren and Aberdeen's Billy Dodds, had both been cautioned by police inquiring into the match at Ibrox on November 11.

Strathclyde police confirmed that "our inquiries are continuing".

Gascoigne gets off lightly, page 13.

★ Thank you ★ Europe! ★

On October 20, 1995, a new milestone was achieved in Europe.

Ares-Serono's genetically engineered (recombinant) human follicle stimulating hormone, became the first pharmaceutical product to receive simultaneous approval in the 15 member countries of the European Union through the new centralised European approval procedure. This drug will be used in the treatment of infertility.

A Swiss pharmaceutical company, Ares-Serono is the world leader in the treatment of infertility. Its R&D pipeline is rich with seven recombinant products with applications in the areas of infertility, metabolism, growth and immunology/oncology.

Today, we would like to thank employees, researchers, health authorities, doctors, patients and everyone who contributed to the birth of our recombinant human follicle stimulating hormone. Ares-Serono's expertise in biotechnology has opened a new era in the treatment of infertility.

AS THE ARES-SERONO GROUP

Serono

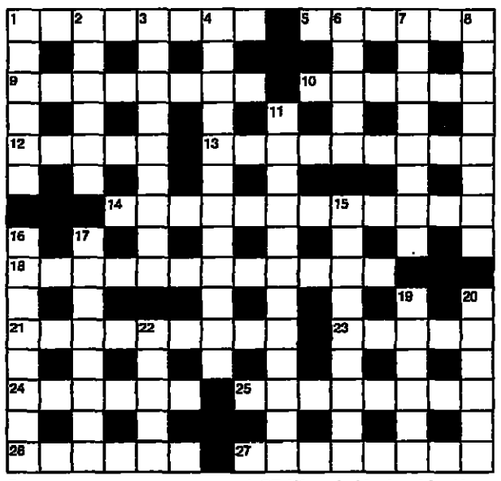
FOUNDED IN 1906 TO BECOME ONE OF TODAY'S BIOTECHNOLOGY LEADERS

While Mr Yentob was hymning Auntie's Brand New Bloomers, somebody's stolen the Cup Final. To be precise: Mr Murdoch. The Beeb's sporting battle is lost. No football or cricket lover can survive on Corporation gruel.
Peter Preston

Page 9

Guardian Crossword No 20,513

Set by Pasquale

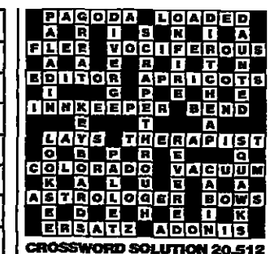


Across

1 Liberal 'cab' would get mentioned (8)
5 Last exhibit (4,2)
9 Yellow tie put back to be . . . in this? (8)
10 One to disaffirm a measure of fineness (6)
12 A bit of hard skin that squirrel gets? (5)
13 Handled glasses — not the sort to drink from (9)
14 Remain calm and avoid the guillotine? (4,4,4)
18 A process involving charges — and there may well be a deposit (12)
21 The northern philosopher may include something blue? (9)
23 Train carriage (5)
24 One totally immersed servant? (6)
25 Wounded fool grabbed by nurse (8)
26 Girl not all there in flutter (6)
27 Advancement achieved by fiendish female behind publicity (8)

Down

1 What zoo running short might make appeal? (6)
2 Precise north put down with pointer (6)
3 Strict line taken with hospital department (9)
4 Modem devices that could give a sequence of mono-bleeps and 'Hi!' (6,6)
6 An echo somehow not hard to detect in the deep (5)
7 One in row followed by another row becomes more delicate (8)
8 Gives warning of death in places of refuge (8)
11 Gooey stuff makes r-ram get lustful within? (6,6)
15 Action of needle brings pain externally, pain internally (9)
16 Conferred education degree outside school (8)
17 Fellow in robbery is pleasure-seeker (8)
19 Coil that is put in piece of cloth (6)
20 Sings about county cricket team (6)
22 Audience's watched part of the drama (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,512

Solution tomorrow

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